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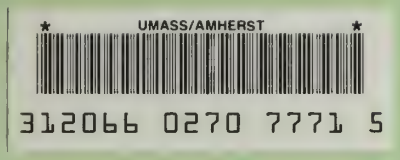

Massachusetts Department of Revenue *Division of Local Services*
Frederick A. Laskey, Commissioner Joseph J. Chessey, Jr., Deputy Commissioner

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Woburn Public Schools Review

Executive Order 393

Education Management Accountability Board Report
November 1999

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 1

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

III. GENERAL CONDITIONS AND FINDINGS 6

1. *Woburn Overview* 6
2. *School Finances* 12
3. *School Committee Budget Trend* 12
4. *Total School District Expenditures* 14
5. *Net School Spending Requirements* 15
6. *School Committee Program Budget* 17
7. *Foundation Budget* 20
8. *Staffing – Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Trends* 22
9. *Payroll – Salary Levels, Union Contracts* 24
10. *Courses and Class Size* 29
11. *Technology* 29
12. *Supplies and Textbooks* 30
13. *Test Scores* 31
14. *Management* 36
15. *Accounting and Reporting* 37
16. *Review of Expenditures* 38
17. *High School Accreditation* 38
18. *Grade 3 Transiency* 39
19. *Special Education And Transitional Bilingual Education* 40
20. *Dropout and Truancy* 42
21. *Maintenance and Capital Improvement* 43
22. *School Improvement Planning* 44
23. *Student Learning Time* 46
24. *Personnel Evaluations* 46
25. *Professional Development* 50
26. *Curriculum Alignment* 52

IV. EMPLOYEE SURVEY 53

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S STATEMENT – EDUCATION REFORM 54

VI. APPENDIX 55

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I. Introduction

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act (MERA) of 1993 has three major goals: to increase student achievement; to achieve adequate funding for all local and regional school districts over a seven-year period; and to bring equity to local taxation efforts based on a community's ability to pay. In February 1997, the Governor issued Executive Order 393 to evaluate the education reform program that was nearing the end of its fourth year. In FY97, Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Ch. 70 state aid for education reached $2.1 billion. With an investment of this magnitude in the Commonwealth's schools, it is critical to "review, investigate and report on the expenditures of funds by school districts, including regional school districts, consistent with the goals of improving student achievement." To that end, Executive Order 393 established the Education Management Accountability Board (EMAB). Chapter 70 state aid has reached $2.8 billion in FY2000.

The Secretary of Administration and Finance, serving as chief of staff to the EMAB, selected a team of auditors from the Department of Revenue's (DOR) Division of Local Services (DLS) to conduct the school district reviews. DOR's Director of Accounts is the chief investigator with authority to examine municipal and school department accounts and transactions pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 44, §§45 and 46A. The reviews are conducted in consultation with the State Auditor and the Commissioner of Education.

This was the second audit performed jointly with staff of the Department of Education (DOE). DOE staff prepared sections 22 through 26 covering the following areas: school improvement planning, student learning time, personnel evaluations, professional development, and curriculum alignment.

The Woburn Public Schools (WPS) is the fifteenth school district reviewed under Executive Order 393. The audit team began the review of WPS in May 1999 and completed it in July 1999. As part of this review, the audit team conducted a confidential survey of employees of the school district and included the results in this report.

The Executive Summary includes some of the more significant observations and findings of the review of WPS' operations. When possible, the audit team has identified and presented best practices, which may be adopted by other school districts. The report discusses all results, best practices and deficiencies, if any, in greater detail in the "General Conditions and Findings" section.

II. Executive Summary

SUMMARY

WPS has made progress in achieving some key education reform goals. The district initiated efforts to align its curriculum with the state curriculum frameworks as soon as

the drafts of the frameworks were made available by DOE. In summer workshops, teachers developed open-ended questions for each grade level and content area, which were disseminated in the form of manuals to every teacher in the district. Test scores are generally above state averages. One of the more successful components of the curriculum requires students to participate in a writing practice program focused on open-ended, critical thinking questions.

WPS has a student population of about 4,700, a budget of $26.9 million as of FY98 and an increase in student enrollment only one-half that of the state increase between FY89 and FY98. Required and actual net school spending as a percent of foundation budget has been greater than 100 percent since FY94. In FY98, the district average salary per FTE teacher exceeded the state average by 10 percent.

Less progress has been made in other areas. District personnel stated in interviews that Woburn educators perceive the professional development plan as simply a list of courses offered by the district as a vehicle for recertification. School improvement plans do not address many components of law and as a result vary in structure and in content. Spending was less than the foundation target in four key areas from FY94 to FY98. A 1999 facilities analysis indicated that all of the schools had poor air quality, water damage, bathrooms in need of renovations and that they were in need of painting. The analysis noted that many of the schools had poor lighting in various areas and that one elementary school experienced structural damage due to settling.

THE FOUNDATION BUDGET

- WPS actual net school spending has exceeded the foundation budget target as determined by DOE for FY94 through FY98. FY95 actual spending was deficient of the required amount by $60,287 which was added to the FY96 requirement. In FY98, the district's local and state percentages of actual net school spending were 89.6 percent and 10.4 percent respectively. FY98 salaries accounted for 82.8 percent of the school operating budget including transportation. [See Section 5 and Appendix A-1]

- FY97 budgeted SPED out-of-district tuitions accounted for $939,000 or 28.6 percent of non-salary budget areas excluding transportation and decreased to $850,000 or 24 percent in FY98. [See Section 6]

- The foundation budget does not mandate spending in any specific category. To encourage appropriate levels of spending, M.G.L. Ch.70 §9 requires that a school district report to the Commissioner of Education when it has failed to meet foundation budget levels for professional development, books and equipment, expanded program and extraordinary maintenance. WPS did not meet these levels for the fiscal years reviewed and did not file a report as required by law nor did DOE direct it to do so. [See Section 7]

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- WPS test scores are generally above state averages. MCAS scores show that WPS scored above the state average scaled scores for all students in grades 4, 8 and 10. SAT scores for 1994 through 1998 are slightly below the state averages. MEAP, the state's educational testing program from 1988 to 1996, showed that WPS scores increased significantly in all four subject areas between 1988 and 1996. Results from the 1998 Iowa Tests of Educational Development (Iowa Tests) indicate that 91 percent of WPS grade 3 students demonstrated a high degree of proficiency in fundamental skills of reading. [See Section 13, Appendices C and D]

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT POWERS

- The Superintendent sets annual district and personal goals, which are approved by the school committee, based on the five systemwide goals. The school committee evaluates the Superintendent based on the district's progress toward meeting the annual goals. [See Section 24]

- The sample of teacher evaluations provided by the district for review varied in quality. It was evident to the on-site team that the evaluation procedure is not consistently applied. Some evaluation forms were incomplete and lacked key elements, including signatures. In interviews, teachers confirmed this inconsistency. [See Section 24]

- Based on a review of the completed evaluations and interviews with teachers and administrators, it is apparent that while Woburn has a well-developed teacher performance evaluation procedure, the district has not implemented that system. [See Section 24]

- Present procedure allows for direct participation of the school committee in evaluating both the assistant superintendent and the business manager, and is not in compliance with their duties and responsibilities and is inconsistent with the intent of Education Reform legislation. [See Section 24]

STUDENT/FTE TEACHER STAFFING

- Between FY93 and FY98, the total number of FTE teachers increased by 31.1 or 10.4 percent, from 298.7 to 329.8. During this same time, the all students/all FTE teacher ratio decreased from 15.3:1 to 14.2:1. The FY93 ratio is somewhat higher than the state average of 15.1:1 while the FY98 ratio is equal to the state average of 14.2:1. The FY93 and FY98 all student/all non-SPED FTE teacher ratios were also less than the state averages in those years. [See Section 8]

TEACHER COMPENSATION

- Between FY93 and FY98, expenditures for salaries rose $3.7 million or 20.2 percent. Total teaching salaries rose $2.9 million or 21.0 percent, reflecting additional spending for new staff as well as pay raises in teachers' contracts. Union contracted annual raises plus step increases for teachers have increased by 53.7 percent from 1993 to 1998. [See Section 9]

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Investment in professional development of staff has been minimal. In FY96 WPS spending reached only 14% of the foundation target, it was still only at 35.9% in FY98. District personnel stated in interviews that it would appear that the professional development program is viewed more as a vehicle for recertification than the professional development of staff. [See Section 25]

TIME AND LEARNING

- Review of the WPS Learning Time Implementation Plan submitted to DOE shows compliance with minimum learning time standards at all levels. The district reached compliance at the high school by paring minutes out of non-instructional periods, such as lunchtime or class passing time. Although these adjustments brought the district into compliance, there needs to be a commitment to creating meaningful increases in additional student learning time. [See Section 23]

TECHNOLOGY

- Full implementation of the district technology plan was projected to cost approximately $5 million over a five-year period. The plan is currently in its fourth year and $878,000 or 17.6 percent has been expended. According to 1997/98 DOE statistics, there are 17.2 students per computer as compared to the state average of 7.2. Also, DOE notes Internet access in the classroom at 0.5 percent, as compared to the state average of 40.4 percent. Computers recently purchased by WPS and others donated to the district decrease the DOE average. [See Section 11]

DISTRICT ISSUES

- In verifying the accuracy of the enrollment numbers, the audit team noted several variances and inaccuracies between the numbers maintained by WPS enrollment system and those reported to DOE on the foundation enrollment report. Specifically, our review of foundation enrollment reports revealed both overstated and understated student populations. The district could not provide the audit team with sufficient documentation to fully determine enrollment discrepancies. [See Section 1]

- In verifying the accuracy of school committee budget amounts, the audit team noted mathematical errors in four separate budgets, which carried forward to the bottom line. These errors showed deficiencies in the amount needed to be provided and ranged from $11,000 to $63,000. [See Section 3]

- The audit team noted that the school committee has not been approving payrolls before the city auditor's office receives them. The DLS has ruled that even after the passage of education reform, the school committee remains the head of the school department for approving bills and payrolls under M.G.L. Ch.41 §§41 and 56. [See Section 15]

BEST PRACTICES

- WPS runs a program at the high school for SPED students with psychiatric needs known as "High Expectations." This program provides special needs students with an education and helps them to develop skills in preparation for future assimilation into mainstream classes or society. High Expectations operates in a structured environment that provides each student with an Individual Education Plan. Students in High Expectations would have to be tuitioned-out of the district if this program did not exist. [See Section 19]

- One of the more successful components of the WPS curriculum is Woburn's Comprehensive Assessment System (WCAS). WCAS is a yearly writing requirement for all students in grades 2 through 12. Students are required to answer open-ended questions four times a year, one time each in English, mathematics, science and social studies. A completed WCAS assignment involves a brainstorm, a writing organizer, a rough draft and a final paper. Since the implementation of this program, WPS has shown success on tests involving open-ended questions such as the MEAP and MCAS.

Auditee's Response

The audit team held an exit conference with the Superintendent and his executive staff on September 10, 1999. The team invited WPS to suggest specific technical corrections and make a formal written response. No formal response was submitted. Instead discussions took place between school staff and DOR staff and school staff and DOE staff regarding various aspects of the report. Additional material was submitted to DOE and revisions were made to the report. The revised report was approved by the Educational Management Accountability Board at its meeting on November 3, 1999 with the provision that WPS could submit additional material covering areas that WPS deemed to be good practices. The material was sent to DOR on November 24, 1999 and has been included as appendix G.

Review Scope

In preparation for the school district reviews, the audit team held meetings with officials from DOE, the State Auditor's Office and other statewide organizations such as the

Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, the Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. The audit team also read published reports on educational and financial issues to prepare for the school district reviews.

The audit team met with the private audit firm that conducts financial audits of WPS. DOE provided data including the end-of-year reports, foundation budgets and statewide comparative data. The DOR's Division of Local Services Municipal Data Bank provided demographic information, community profiles and overall state aid data. While on site, the audit team interviewed officials including, but not limited to, the Mayor, the school committee chair, the school Superintendent, the assistant superintendent for curriculum, the business manager, the city auditor, principals and the directors of SPED, educational technology and facilities. Documents reviewed included vendor and personnel contracts, invoices, payroll data, statistics on students and teachers as well as test results and reports submitted to DOE.

In keeping with the goals set out by the EMAB, the school district review was designed to determine whether or not basic financial goals related to education reform have been met. The audit team gathered data related to performance such as test scores, student to teacher ratios and class sizes to show results and operational trends. However, this report does not intend to present a definitive opinion regarding the quality of education in WPS, or its successes or failures in meeting particular education reform goals. Rather, it is intended to present a relevant summary of data to the EMAB for evaluation and comparison purposes.

The focus of this review was on operational issues. It did not encompass all of the tests that are normally part of a year-end financial audit such as: review of internal controls; cash reconciliation of accounts; testing compliance with purchasing and expenditure laws and regulations; and generally accepted accounting principles. The audit team tested financial transactions on a limited basis only. The audit team also excluded federal grants, state grants except for Equal Education Opportunity (EEO) and Per Pupil Education Aid, revolving accounts and student activity accounts. The audit team did not test statistical data relating to enrollment, test scores and other measures of achievement. This report is intended for the information and use of EMAB and WPS. However, this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is not limited.

III. General Conditions and Findings

1. Woburn Overview

DOE classifies the city of Woburn as an economically developed suburb. Its 1996 population was 36,628, up 1.9 percent from 1990 and up only two people from 1980. It is located approximately 10 miles northwest of Boston and is governed by an elected mayor and nine-member city council. Marshall's Inc., Woburn's largest employer, employs 1,000 people. The taxable value of city's largest taxpayer, Boston Edison, is valued in FY98 at $39.2 million, or 1.6 percent of the city's total taxable value.

Like many Massachusetts school districts, Woburn faced budgetary pressures in the early 1990's as a result of an economic recession and the associated decline in municipal state aid for education and in financial contributions to schools. The Woburn city council approved school operating budgets for FY91 to FY93 less than the school operating budget for FY90. For FY94, a proposition 2½ override vote to maintain educational programs for $600,000 lost by a substantial margin.

Charts 1-1 and 1-2 show some key demographic and economic statistics for Woburn.

Chart 1-1

City of Woburn
Demographic Data

1996 Population	36,628
FY99 Residential Tax Rate	$11.12
FY99 Average Single Family Tax	$1,823
FY99 Avg. Assessed Value Per Single Family	$163,907
FY99 Tax Levy	$45,350,320
FY99 Levy Limit	$45,351,743
FY99 Levy Ceiling	$70,873,675
FY99 State Aid	$11,421,580
FY99 State Aid as % of Revenue	14.2%
1989 Per Capita Income	$18,155
1996 Average Unemployment Rate	3.7%

Note: Data provided by DLS

As of the audit date, the district consists of one high school (grades 9-12), two middle schools (grades 6-8) and nine elementary schools (grades K-5). The district's central administration offices are located in one middle school. The city belongs to the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational school district for grades 9-12.

As of our audit date, the Superintendent has been in this position for six years, the assistant superintendent for curriculum for 13 years and the business manager for two years.

The organization chart indicates that the assistant superintendent for curriculum, the assistant superintendent for business (now the business manager), and directors of special education, educational technology and evening school report directly to the Superintendent. The chart also indicates that all principals, teachers and support staff report to the assistant superintendent for curriculum. It became clear to the audit team and is evidenced throughout this report that the assistant superintendent for curriculum is heavily involved with the day-to-day operations and functions of the district.

WPS' Youth Engaged Service (YES) program is a community service operation developed in 1993 that encourages students to volunteer their time in the community.

Qualified students receive recognition from the school district at the graduation of each school level. Recent graduating classes have experienced around a 60 percent participation rate.

Transportation is provided to students who live over 1½ miles from the school they attend and to all kindergarten students door to door.

For FY92 and FY93 only, general legislation authorized a budgetary deferral of teachers' summer pay at local option. The city of Woburn adopted the deferral option for both fiscal years which totaled $2.3 million. The legislation allows an amortization of the deferral over 15 years beginning in FY97. The city's current plan is to amortize $152,837 in each fiscal year through FY2011.

WPS' high school graduating class of 1997 indicated that 75.6 percent intended to go on to a two or four year college, a rate higher than the 71.9 percent state average. The percent of graduates planning to go to work was 15.6 percent, a rate lower than the state average of 16.8 percent. In 1997, the high school dropout rate was 1.3 percent, less than the state average of 3.4 percent.

Chart 1-2

Woburn Public Schools
Demographic Data 1997/98

	WPS	State Average
Enrollment: Race / Ethnicity		
White	91.6%	77.5%
Minority	8.4%	22.5%
Limited English Proficiency	1.0%	4.8%
Special Education	16.2%	16.6%
Percentage Attending Private School -1997	2.2%	10.6%
High School Drop-Out Rate - 1997	1.3%	3.4%
Plan of Graduates - Class of '97:		
4 Year College	64.5%	53.4%
2 Year College	11.1%	18.5%
2 or 4 Year College	75.6%	71.9%
Work	15.6%	16.8%

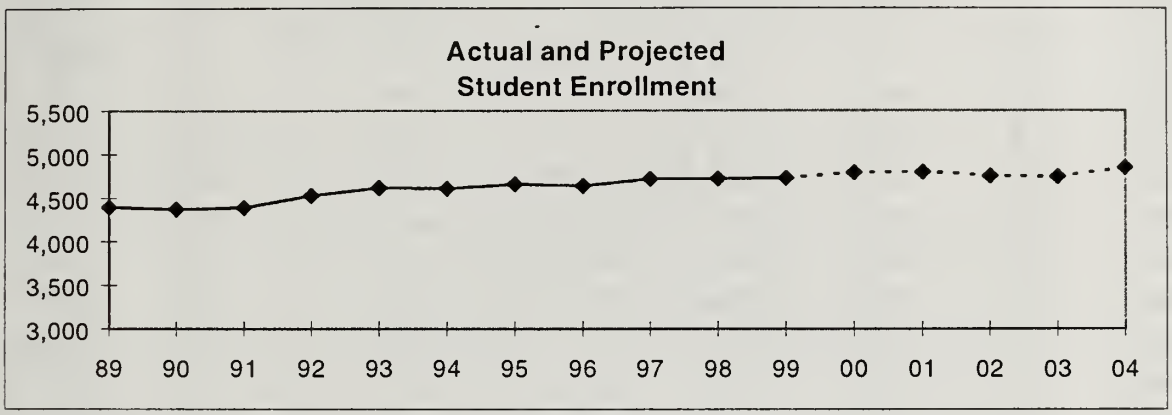
Note: Data provided by DOE. Special Education data as of June 1998.

Chart 1-3 illustrates WPS enrollment trend from October 1988, the 1988/89 school year, to October 1998, the 1998/99 school year. Enrollments projected by the district are shown from October 1999 to October 2003. All enrollments are as of October 1. Enrollments from October 1989 to October 1998 include tuitioned-out and exclude

tuitoned-in students. Enrollment projections were included in a 1999 school facilities analysis which included options for a systemwide long-range school facilities plan.

Chart 1-3

Woburn Public Schools
Actual and Projected Student Enrollment
School Years 1988/89 to 2003/04



Note: Enrollment as of October 1st. Data obtained from WPS.
A solid line represents actual enrollment; a dotted line represents projected enrollment

As shown in *Chart 1-3a*, enrollment has increased from 4,396 in October of the 1988/89 school year to 4,721 in October of the 1997/98 school year. Total WPS enrollment increased by 7.4 percent during this time period, a lower rate of increase than the state average of 15.1 percent. The chart shows a total enrollment increase in ten of the fifteen years represented in the chart. Elementary enrollment increased by 21 percent from 1988/89 to 1997/98, a slightly lower rate of increase than the state average of 22.1 percent. Enrollment projections show generally increasing enrollments at the middle and high school levels in contrast to the elementary level. In this case, ungraded students represent all substantially separate SPED students educated by WPS and not tuitioned-out.

Chart 1-3a

Woburn Public Schools
Actual and Projected Student Enrollment

School Year	Elementary School Pre K & K	Elementary School 1 - 5	Middle School 6 - 8	High School 9 - 12	Ungraded	Total Enrollment
88-89	358	1,644	973	1,325	96	4,396
89-90	354	1,672	996	1,297	52	4,371
90-91	409	1,679	1,038	1,194	71	4,391
91-92	438	1,779	981	1,228	103	4,529
92-93	469	1,861	1,018	1,182	89	4,619
93-94	439	1,888	979	1,211	93	4,610
94-95	450	1,931	1,029	1,181	67	4,658
95-96	503	1,968	1,042	1,108	19	4,640
96-97	442	2,033	1,112	1,105	24	4,716
97-98	409	1,989	1,129	1,173	21	4,721
98-99	415	1,972	1,166	1,155	22	4,730
99-00	499	1,964	1,136	1,191		4,790
00-01	459	1,953	1,123	1,269		4,804
01-02	455	1,845	1,159	1,297		4,756
02-03	471	1,796	1,175	1,301		4,743
03-04	472	1,768	1,168	1,441		4,849
WPS 89-98 % Change	14.2%	21.0%	16.0%	-11.5%		7.4%
State 89-98 % Change	20.7%	22.1%	21.8%	2.8%		15.1%
WPS 99-04 % Change	13.7%	-10.3%	0.2%	24.8%		2.5%

Note: Data obtained from WPS.

Chart 1-4 illustrates the elementary, middle and high school enrollments as a percentage of the total enrollment.

Chart 1-4

Woburn Public Schools
Distribution of Enrollment by Type of School

School Year	Elementary School Pre K & K	Elementary School 1 - 5	Middle School 6 - 8	High School 9 - 12	Ungraded	Total Enrollment
88-89	8.1%	37.4%	22.1%	30.1%	2.2%	100.0%
89-90	8.1%	38.3%	22.8%	29.7%	1.2%	100.0%
90-91	9.3%	38.2%	23.6%	27.2%	1.6%	100.0%
91-92	9.7%	39.3%	21.7%	27.1%	2.3%	100.0%
92-93	10.2%	40.3%	22.0%	25.6%	1.9%	100.0%
93-94	9.5%	41.0%	21.2%	26.3%	2.0%	100.0%
94-95	9.7%	41.5%	22.1%	25.4%	1.4%	100.0%
95-96	10.8%	42.4%	22.5%	23.9%	0.4%	100.0%
96-97	9.4%	43.1%	23.6%	23.4%	0.5%	100.0%
97-98	8.7%	42.1%	23.9%	24.8%	0.4%	100.0%
98-99	8.8%	41.7%	24.7%	24.4%	0.5%	100.0%
99-00	10.4%	41.0%	23.7%	24.9%	0.0%	100.0%
00-01	9.6%	40.7%	23.4%	26.4%	0.0%	100.0%
01-02	9.6%	38.8%	24.4%	27.3%	0.0%	100.0%
02-03	9.9%	37.9%	24.8%	27.4%	0.0%	100.0%
03-04	9.7%	36.5%	24.1%	29.7%	0.0%	100.0%
Percentage Point Chg '89-'98	0.5	4.7	1.8	-5.3	-1.7	0.0
Percentage Point Chg '99-'04	1.0	-5.2	-0.6	5.3	-0.5	0.0

Note: Data obtained from WPS.
Percentages may not calculate due to rounding.

In verifying the accuracy of the enrollment numbers, the audit team noted several variances and inaccuracies between the numbers maintained by WPS enrollment system and those reported to DOE on the foundation enrollment report. Specifically, our review of foundation enrollment reports revealed both overstated and understated student populations. Errors that were found since FY94 include reporting private school students in the foundation enrollment, reporting a number for pre-school students which could not be supported by individual school reports, inconsistently reporting tuitioned-in and tuitioned-out students and reporting ungraded students as SPED pre-school.

In dollar terms, the reporting of private school students in the foundation enrollment resulted in a total of $31,600 in excess state aid since FY95. The initial error carried forward because according to the education aid formula, minimum aid (based on foundation enrollment) becomes a factor in the following fiscal year's base aid. Other

errors due to understating enrollment would reduce this amount. However, the district could not provide the audit team with sufficient documentation to fully determine enrollment discrepancies. The audit team suggests that in the future the district use and save supporting documentation on the completion of the foundation enrollment report and also that the district review annual DOE instructions for the report.

2. School Finances

Overall, WPS has benefited from additional funds available due to education reform. As state aid increased from $1.9 million in FY94 to $3.0 million in FY98, the combination of state education aid and the local share allowed the district to hire more teachers, to fund additional SPED costs, to increase salaries and to spend for new academic initiatives.

School district funding and financial reporting requirements are generally complex and become especially complicated in the context of education reform. A district annually determines how much money it will spend on education. DOE considers only certain expenditures and funding when determining whether or not a district meets education reform requirements.

This audit examines school funding primarily from three perspectives: the school committee budget, net school spending, and the foundation budget.

The audit team examined the school committee budget in some detail as a matter of practice because it reflects basic financial and educational decisions, provides an overview of financial operations and indicates how the community expects to meet the goals and objectives of education reform.

Net school spending, the sum of the required minimum contribution from local revenues plus state chapter 70 education aid, is a figure issued annually by DOE that must be met by school districts under education reform.

The foundation budget is a school spending target under education reform which the school district should meet. Calculated on the basis of pupil characteristics and community demographics, it is designed to ensure that a minimum level of educational resources is available per student in each school district. Under education reform, all school districts are expected to meet their foundation budget targets by the year 2000.

3. School Committee Budget Trend

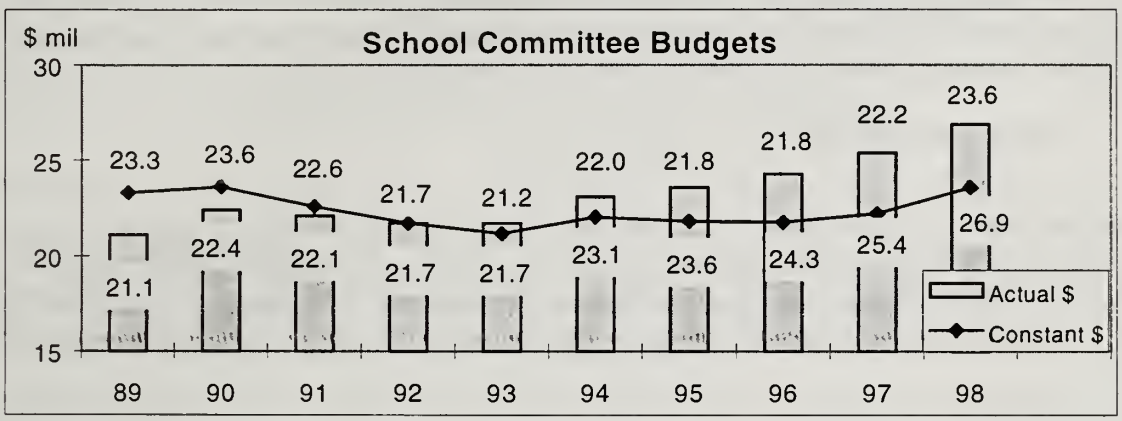
Chart 3-1 illustrates the school committee budget trend from FY89 to FY98. For this purpose, the budget includes the initial city council action on the school committee's operating budget. Separate city council action for capital improvement and state grants for EEO and Per Pupil Aid are not included.

The total school committee budget as defined above increased by $600,000, or 2.8 percent between FY89 and FY93. With education reform aid, the budget increased between FY93 and FY98 by $5.2 million or 24 percent.

In constant dollars, where FY92 is set at 100, the chart illustrates how the school committee budget fared with respect to inflation over time. From FY89 to FY98, the school committee budget as defined above increased from $23.3 million to $23.6 million, a 1.3 percent increase in constant dollars. From FY93 to FY98, it increased by $2.4 million or 11.3 percent in constant dollars, from $21.2 million to $23.6 million. In constant dollars, WPS experienced net budget increases in four of the last nine years.

Chart 3-1

Woburn Public Schools
School Committee Budgets in Actual and Constant Dollars
FY89 - FY98



Note: Data obtained from WPS. Years are in fiscal years. Numbers in the bars represent actual $ and above the bars constant $.

In FY99, WPS renewed a contract with a private food service management company to manage the school department's food services program. The company guaranteed to reimburse the school department for the amount by which the actual surplus of the food services program is less than management company's projected surplus, up to $50,000 only in the first year and with certain conditions. WPS officials indicated to the audit team that as of the audit date, a payment by the vendor is expected but that the calculation of the actual amount per the guarantee has not been completed.

In FY98 and in FY99, WPS received $100,000 and $75,000 respectively from DOE's Foundation Reserve Program, or "pothole" fund, to help fund the cost of students using school choice to attend Minuteman Voc-Tech rather than Northeast Metropolitan Voc-Tech. Local officials indicated to DOE in their application that a complex problem exists between state law and administrative rulings that requires the city to pay both Northeast Metropolitan and Minuteman for the same students.

FY93 cherry sheet information indicates that $0 was estimated in Equal Education Opportunity (EEO) grants and that $446,400 was estimated in Per Pupil Aid. The purpose of EEO grants was to raise per pupil direct service expenditures in Massachusetts cities and towns in which these expenditures were below 85 percent of the state average. Per Pupil Aid funds, available in FY93 only, were exclusively for educational purposes and must have been used to implement new initiatives, reduce class size and make management changes or other improvements in the educational program. The FY93 end-of-year report indicates that Per Pupil Aid was used for instructional purposes.

In verifying the accuracy of school committee budget amounts, the audit team noted mathematical errors in four separate budgets which carried forward to the bottom line. These errors showed deficiencies in the amount needed to be provided and ranged from $11,000 to $63,000. WPS officials indicated that these errors were due to inaccurate spreadsheet formulas and that they were being corrected as they were being discovered. Since the city council approves the bottom line of the school budget, these mathematical errors must be made up in the school budget. WPS officials also indicated that a budget line item reserved for salary adjustments and evaluations has been used to make up the difference.

4. Total School District Expenditures

Total school district expenditures includes expenditures by the school committee and by the city for school purposes as reported in the DOE end-of-year report. Total school district expenditures decreased between FY89 and FY93 by $1.3 million or 4.5 percent. Expenditures increased between FY93 and FY98 by $4.4 million or 16.1 percent.

Expenditures paid for by the city for school purposes were at $4.4 million in FY89 and in FY93. In FY98, the major components were $2.2 million insurance for active employees, $1.1 million for regional school assessment and $541,000 for general administrative services.

In verifying the accuracy of the expenditure numbers, the audit team noted that $12,750,000 in short term principal was included in the FY93 end-of-year report. According to city records, this amount was repaid by 6/30/93 and should not have been reported. For the purpose of *Chart 4-1*, it has been excluded.

In verifying the accuracy of the expenditure numbers, the audit team noted an entry in FY89 of $4.4 million for operations and maintenance other expenditures which could not be completely supported by WPS. For the purpose of *Chart 4-1*, it has been included.

Chart 4-1

Woburn Public Schools
Total School District Expenditures
(in millions of dollars)

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
School Committee	$24.2	$22.8	$22.9	$23.6	$24.4	$25.6	$27.1
City	$4.4	$4.4	$5.1	$4.0	$3.8	$4.3	$4.6
Total	$28.6	$27.3	$28.1	$27.6	$28.2	$29.8	$31.7

Note: Data obtained from WPS. Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Chart 4-2 shows the FY94 to FY98 trend in net school spending per student. It indicates that actual net school spending per student has increased from $5,638 in FY94 to $6,153 in FY98, or 9.1 percent. The inflation adjusted figures increased from $5,374 in FY94 to $5,397 in FY98, or 0.4 percent in 1992 dollars.

Chart 4-2

Woburn Public Schools
Net School Spending Per Student
Actual and Constant (1992=100) Dollars

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY94-FY98 Change
Expenditures / Student in Actual $	$5,638	$5,524	$5,677	$5,844	$6,153	9.1%
Expenditures / Student in 1992 $	$5,374	$5,110	$5,137	$5,172	$5,397	0.4%

Note: Data obtained from WPS

5. Net School Spending Requirements

Pursuant to the education reform law, DOE develops annual spending requirements and budget targets for each school district. The requirements are based on a formula which is used to set specific minimum spending requirements and in combination with other factors is also used to set foundation budget targets as well as determining the amount of state aid for each district.

Each school district must meet a net school spending requirement. Expenditures which count towards a district's net school spending, generally include all education related expenditures paid for with state aid under Chapter 70 and municipal appropriations used for that purpose. Excluded from the net school spending definition are expenditures for school transportation, school lunch, school construction and certain capital expenditures. Expenditures from federal funds and from school revolving accounts are also excluded.

As indicated in *Chart 5-1*, the recommended foundation budget target, that is the ultimate spending goal for the district, increased from $23.5 million in FY94 to $27.1 million in FY98, a 15.3 percent increase. During this same time period, required net school spending increased by 15.4 percent, from $23.7 million in FY94 to $27.3 million in FY98. Both the required and actual net school spending amounts have been consistently above the recommended foundation budget target. In FY95, DOR granted WPS an expenditure waiver of $101,299 which lowered their required net school spending to $25.8 million. Despite the waiver, the requirement was not met and a deficiency of $60,287 was added to the FY96 requirement.

Chart 5-1

Woburn Public Schools
Foundation Budget and Net School Spending (NSS)
(in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Foundation Budget Target	$23.5	$25.5	$25.2	$25.7	$27.1
Required NSS as % of Foundation	100.8%	101.2%	102.2%	102.5%	101.0%
Required Net School Spending	$23.7	$25.8	$25.7	$26.4	$27.3
Actual Net School Spending	$26.0	$25.7	$26.3	$27.6	$29.0
Variance $	$2.3	($0.1)	$0.6	$1.2	$1.7
Variance %	9.7%	-0.2%	2.5%	4.5%	6.3%
Actual NSS as % of Foundation	110.7%	101.0%	104.7%	107.1%	107.4%

Note: Data obtained from DOE and WPS. Percentages may not calculate due to rounding.

Chart 5-2 indicates that state aid, as a percent of actual net school spending, increased from 7.2 percent in FY94 to 10.4 percent in FY98, while the local share decreased from 92.8 percent in FY94 to 89.6 percent in FY98. The chart also indicates that from FY94 to FY98, the actual local contribution generally exceeded the required local contribution by as low as 2.7 percent and by as high as 10.6 percent.

Chart 5-2

Woburn Public Schools
Net School Spending
(in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Required Local Contribution	$21.8	$23.8	$23.4	$23.7	$24.3
Actual Local Contribution	$24.1	$23.7	$24.0	$24.9	$26.0
Variance $	$2.3	($0.1)	$0.6	$1.2	$1.7
Variance %	10.6%	-0.3%	2.7%	5.0%	7.1%
Required Net School Spending	$23.7	$25.8	$25.7	$26.4	$27.3
Actual Net School Spending	$26.0	$25.7	$26.3	$27.6	$29.0
Local Share $	$24.1	$23.7	$24.0	$24.9	$26.0
State Aid $	$1.9	$2.0	$2.3	$2.7	$3.0
Local Share %	92.8%	92.2%	91.1%	90.3%	89.6%
State Aid %	7.2%	7.8%	8.9%	9.7%	10.4%

Note: Data obtained from DOE and WPS. Percentages may not calculate due to rounding.

6. School Committee Program Budget

Within the context of education reform and improving student achievement, the audit team tries to establish what a school district budgets and spends on academic courses such as English and science versus other subjects or programs. Program budgets are generally intended to show the total financial resources for a particular program or activity. Well developed program budgets include goal statements, planned actions and expected outcomes along with the total amount of resources required to achieve the objectives. In the school environment, a program budget for mathematics, for example, would show salaries for mathematics teachers and related costs such as supplies, textbooks, etc. It would also indicate the expected outcomes for the budget year.

WPS produces a budget detailing teaching salaries by level and by discipline. For expenditures, only instructional supplies are detailed by level. This information is used in *Chart 6-1* to summarize the school committee budget for FY93, FY95, FY97 and FY98 into particular program areas. The school transportation budget has been excluded from this data to approximate net school spending.

According to *Chart 6-1*, budgeted amounts for all other salaries increased most in dollar terms between FY93 and FY98. This amount includes salaries for non-core

subject teachers and for non-instructional personnel. Budgeted non-core subject teacher salaries increased by approximately $1.1 million. These salaries are detailed by selected discipline in *Appendix A-2*. Budgeted non-instructional salaries increased in secretarial by approximately $150,000 and in central administration by approximately $90,000. Budgeted amounts for all other expenses increased most in dollar terms during this same time period. This amount generally includes systemwide expenses, general maintenance and repair and athletics. Budgeted general maintenance and repairs increased by $170,000, computer equipment increased by $165,000 in FY98 and also by $45,000 in athletics. Budgeted cafeteria expenses decreased by $60,000.

Chart 6-1

Woburn Public Schools
School Committee Program Budget
(in thousands of dollars)

					FY93 - FY98		FY98
	FY93	FY95	FY97	FY98	$ Diff	% Diff	% of Tot
Elementary	$5,061	$5,738	$6,190	$6,410	$1,349	26.6%	24.8%
Certain Core Subjects	$3,299	$3,548	$3,832	$3,899	$600	18.2%	15.1%
Art and Music	$476	$622	$614	$646	$170	35.7%	2.5%
SPED	$2,305	$2,582	$2,708	$3,083	$779	33.8%	11.9%
All Other Salaries	$6,799	$7,474	$7,987	$8,233	$1,434	21.1%	31.9%
Out-of-District Tuitions	$770	$825	$939	$850	$80	10.4%	3.3%
Fuel and Utilities	$872	$868	$850	$900	$28	3.2%	3.5%
Instructional Supplies	$539	$513	$500	$704	$165	30.6%	2.7%
All Other Expenses	$756	$836	$998	$1,086	$329	43.5%	4.2%
Total	$20,878	$23,005	$24,619	$25,811	$4,933	23.6%	100.0%

Note: Data obtained from WPS. School transportation and employee benefits are not included.
Core subjects included here are English, mathematics, science and social studies.

Salary and non-salary budgets by WPS program categories for FY89, FY93, FY97 and FY98 are shown in *Appendix A-1*. This appendix shows budget increases in both salary and non-salary categories from FY89 to FY93 and from FY93 to FY98. This appendix includes budgeted transportation.

Chart 6-1a shows the same program budget data on a percentage distribution basis to illustrate how particular budget items have changed since FY93 in certain areas.

Chart 6-1a

Woburn Public Schools
School Committee Program Budget
Percentage Distribution

	FY93	FY95	FY97	FY98	% Point Diff. FY93 - FY98
Elementary	24.2%	24.9%	25.1%	24.8%	0.6
Certain Core Subjects	15.8%	15.4%	15.6%	15.1%	-0.7
Art and Music	2.3%	2.7%	2.5%	2.5%	0.2
SPED	11.0%	11.2%	11.0%	11.9%	0.9
All Other Salaries	32.6%	32.5%	32.4%	31.9%	-0.7
Out-of-District Tuitions	3.7%	3.6%	3.8%	3.3%	-0.4
Fuel and Utilities	4.2%	3.8%	3.5%	3.5%	-0.7
Instructional Supplies	2.6%	2.2%	2.0%	2.7%	0.1
All Other Expenses	3.6%	3.6%	4.1%	4.2%	0.6
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0

Note: Data obtained from WPS. School transportation and employee benefits are not included. Core subjects included here are English, mathematics, science and social studies. Elementary includes kindergarten. Percentages many not add due to rounding.

Chart 6-2 provides a more detailed review of budgeted teaching salaries by selected discipline. This chart indicates that elementary education and certain core subjects increased most in dollar terms for the disciplines shown from FY93 to FY98. Budgeted salaries for physical education and for art and music increased most in percentage terms during this time period.

Chart 6-2

Woburn Public Schools
Budgeted Teaching Salaries - Selected Disciplines
(in thousands of dollars)

					FY93 - FY98		
Discipline	FY93	FY95	FY97	FY98	$ Diff.	% Diff	% of Total
Certain Core Subjects	$3,299	$3,548	$3,832	$3,899	$600	18.2%	22.2%
Art and Music	$476	$622	$614	$646	$170	35.7%	6.3%
Kindergarten	$331	$434	$508	$431	$100	30.2%	3.7%
Physical Education	$471	$601	$591	$661	$190	40.3%	7.0%
SPED	$1,625	$1,847	$1,888	$2,067	$442	27.2%	16.3%
Elementary	$3,969	$4,350	$4,666	$4,824	$855	21.5%	31.6%
Grade 6	$700	$767	$855	$862	$162	23.2%	6.0%
Foreign Language	$749	$875	$923	$936	$187	25.0%	6.9%
Total Selected	$11,620	$13,044	$13,877	$14,326	$2,706	23.3%	100.0%

Note: Data obtained from WPS. Core subjects included here are English, math, science and social studies.

Chart 6-2a shows the same program budget data on a percentage distribution basis to illustrate how budgeted teaching salaries in selected disciplines have changed since FY93.

Chart 6-2a

Woburn Public Schools
Distribution of Teachers' Salaries - Selected Disciplines

Discipline	FY93	FY95	FY97	FY98	% Point Change FY93 - FY98
Certain Core Subjects	28.4%	27.2%	27.6%	27.2%	-1.2
Art and Music	4.1%	4.8%	4.4%	4.5%	0.4
Kindergarten	2.8%	3.3%	3.7%	3.0%	0.2
Physical Education	4.1%	4.6%	4.3%	4.6%	0.6
SPED	14.0%	14.2%	13.6%	14.4%	0.4
Elementary	34.2%	33.3%	33.6%	33.7%	-0.5
Grade 6	6.0%	5.9%	6.2%	6.0%	0.0
Foreign Language	6.4%	6.7%	6.7%	6.5%	0.1
Total All Selected	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Note: Data obtained from WPS. Core subjects included here are English, math, science and social studies. Percentages and percentage point changes may not add due to rounding.

7. Foundation Budget

The foundation budget is a target level of spending developed to ensure that a minimum level of education resources is available per student in each school district. The foundation budget shown in *Appendix B* is determined by a number of factors including enrollment, staffing and salary levels. The key items in the foundation budget include: payroll, non-salary expenses, professional development, expanded programs, extraordinary maintenance, and books and instructional equipment. DOE calculates each of these budget items using the previous year's end-of-year pupil enrollment with adjustments for special education, bilingual and low-income students. Certain salary levels and full time equivalent (FTE) standards are used to calculate salary budgets which also include annual adjustments for inflation.

The foundation budget establishes spending targets by grade (pre-school, kindergarten, elementary, junior/middle and high school) and program (regular day, special education, bilingual, vocational and expanded or after-school activities). Grade and program spending targets are intended to serve as guidelines only and are not binding on local school districts. To encourage appropriate levels of spending, M.G.L. Ch.70, §9 requires that a school district report to the Commissioner of Education when it has failed to meet foundation budget spending levels for professional development,

books and instructional equipment, extended/expanded programs and extraordinary maintenance.

According to *Chart 7-1*, expenditures did not reach foundation budget for any of the categories in any of the fiscal years shown. WPS did not file a report with the Commissioner's office as required by Ch. 70, §9 for these fiscal years nor did DOE direct WPS to submit such report. WPS officials indicated to the audit team that professional development has not been calculated as defined by DOE guidelines for the last two years. Although requested by the audit team, information regarding the calculation methodology was not provided.

Chart 7-1

Woburn Public Schools
Net School Spending According to Foundation Budget
(in thousands of dollars)

	FY94		FY96		FY98	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Professional Development	$0	$373	$56	$400	$155	$432
Books and Equipment	$292	$1,318	$749	$1,367	$1,005	$1,447
Expanded Program	$0	$126	$0	$260	$0	$309
Extraordinary Maintenance	$0	$699	$0	$747	$0	$807

Expenditures As Percentage of Foundation Budget

	FY94 NSS/FND	FY96 NSS/FND	FY98 NSS/FND
Professional Development	0.0%	14.0%	35.9%
Books and Equipment	22.1%	54.8%	69.4%
Expanded Program	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Extraordinary Maintenance	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Note: Data obtained from DOE and WPS. Percentages calculated using whole dollars.

Appendix B shows the WPS foundation budget for FY94, FY96 and FY98. For each year, the chart shows expenditures and variances from the foundation budgets as well as how expenditures compare with the foundation budgets. Although specific spending levels were not met, total spending exceeded the total foundation budget for each of the fiscal years shown. For FY98, spending was greater than the foundation budget for teaching salaries by $5.7 million, in custodial salaries by $435,000, but was less than the foundation budget target for support salaries by $2.4 million and in extraordinary maintenance by $807,000.

8. Staffing – Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Trends

Since salaries comprise approximately 70.0 percent of the FY98 total school district expenditures, budget changes closely reflect changes in staffing or FTEs. According to *Chart 8-1*, WPS had a total of 637.3 FTEs including 357.3 teachers in FY90. By FY93, these numbers had dipped to 557.7 and 298.7 respectively, as fiscal pressures in the early 1990s forced the district to cut teachers and to reduce other staff. In this context, teachers exclude instructional assistants. Para-professionals, guidance counselors, psychologists, cafeteria, custodians and maintenance personnel are included as all others in the chart.

FY90 FTEs are used in place of FY89 FTEs for purposes of this section. WPS was unable to provide the audit team with the October 1, 1988 School System Summary Report.

As *Chart 8-1* indicates, WPS went through a period of staff reductions between FY90 and FY93, reducing FTEs by 79.6 including 58.6 teaching positions, and between FY93 and FY98, increasing FTEs by 3.1 including 31.1 teaching positions. This compares to a total student enrollment increase of 2.2 percent from FY93 to FY98.

Over the FY90 to FY98 period, schools in the district experienced a decline in total FTEs of 12.0 percent while teachers also decreased by 7.7 percent. The enrollment increase over this time period was 8.0 percent.

Chart 8-1

Woburn Public Schools
Staffing Trends
Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

	Total FTEs	Teachers	Teachers as % of FTEs	Instruct. Assists.	Administrators	All Others
FY90	637.3	357.3	56.1%	106.0	20.0	154.0
FY93	557.7	298.7	53.6%	93.0	16.0	150.0
FY98	560.8	329.8	58.8%	93.0	17.0	121.0
FY90-93	-79.6	-58.6		-13.0	-4.0	-4.0
Incr./ Decr.	-12.5%	-16.4%		-12.3%	-20.0%	-2.6%
FY93-98	3.1	31.1		0.0	1.0	-29.0
Incr. / Decr.	0.6%	10.4%		0.0%	6.3%	-19.3%
FY90-98	-76.5	-27.5		-13.0	-3.0	-33.0
Incr. / Decr.	-12.0%	-7.7%		-12.3%	-15.0%	-21.4%

Note: Data obtained from WPS. FTEs are from WPS budget and October 1 report.

Chart 8-2 shows changes in teaching FTEs by type of school or program. The largest increase in teachers occurred in elementary between FY93 and FY98, when 12.5 FTEs were added. This was a 12.6 percent increase. High school teacher FTEs increased by 2.7 and middle school teacher FTEs increased by 6.8.

Chart 8-2

Woburn Public Schools
FTE Teachers By Program
(excluding teaching aides)

	FY90	FY93	FY98	FY93 - FY98 Increase	% Incr / Decr
Early Childhood	10.0	8.0	9.0	1.0	12.5%
Elementary	112.5	99.0	111.5	12.5	12.6%
Middle	91.0	70.2	77.0	6.8	9.7%
High	100.0	80.1	82.8	2.7	3.4%
Subtotal	313.5	257.3	280.3	23.0	8.9%
ESL	2.0	1.4	2.0	0.6	42.9%
Special Education	41.8	40.0	47.5	7.5	18.8%
Subtotal	43.8	41.4	49.5	8.1	19.6%
Total	357.3	298.7	329.8	31.1	10.4%

Note: Data obtained from WPS. FTEs are from WPS budget.

Student/teacher ratios increased between FY90 and FY93 and then decreased between FY93 and FY98 as shown in *Chart 8-3*. The overall ratio for students to teachers was 12.1:1 in FY90, 15.3:1 in FY93 and 14.2:1 by FY98. The FY90 ratio was lower than the state average, while the FY93 was higher than the state average. The FY98 ratio was equal to the state average. When adjusted for the number of SPED teachers, using the same total student population for illustration purposes, the resulting all student ratios are somewhat higher. The non-SPED teacher ratios were all less than the state averages.

Chart 8-3

Woburn Public Schools
Students Per FTE Teacher

	FY90	FY93	FY98
All Students / All FTE Teachers	12.1	15.3	14.2
All Students / All FTE Teachers - State Average	**14.1**	**15.1**	**14.2**
All Students / All Non-SPED FTE Teachers	13.8	17.7	16.6
All Students / All Non-SPED FTE Teachers - State Avg.	**17.7**	**19.2**	**18.1**
All Students / All Non-SPED FTE Teachers			
Kindergarten	16.2	24.3	18.9
Elementary	14.7	18.7	17.5
Middle	10.9	14.5	14.6
High	12.6	14.5	13.9

Note: Data obtained from WPS and DOE

Teaching FTEs increased in English and science and decreased in the other core subject areas of mathematics and social studies as shown in *Chart 8-4*. FY98 levels are lower than they were in FY90 in all core subjects shown.

Chart 8-4

Woburn Public Schools
Teachers - Core Subjects
High and Middle School FTEs

				FY93 - FY98	
	FY90	FY93	FY98	Increase	% Incr / Decr
English	25.8	21.4	21.8	0.4	1.9%
Mathematics	27.6	19.6	18.6	-1.0	-5.1%
Science	22.0	14.0	18.4	4.4	31.4%
Social Studies	24.0	19.6	19.0	-0.6	-3.1%
Total	99.4	74.6	77.8	3.2	4.3%

Note: Data obtained from WPS. FTEs from WPS budgets

9. Payroll – Salary Levels, Union Contracts

Expenditures for salaries are reviewed to determine how the school district has increased expenditures for teachers and how teaching salaries have increased as a result of union contract agreements.

Chart 9-1 indicates how school salaries have increased in comparison to total school district expenditures. WPS increased its expenditures for salaries by $3.7 million between FY93 and FY98, an increase of 20.2 percent. This is 3.8 percentage points more than the increase in total school district expenditures during the same time period. Total salaries made up 67.7 percent of these expenditures in FY93 and increased to 70.0 percent on FY98. Total school district expenditures include fringe benefits.

Of the $4.5 million total school district expenditure increase from FY93 to FY98, $3.7 million is attributable to salaries. Of this $3.7 million salary increase, $2.9 million, or 77.6 percent, applied to teaching salaries and $800,000, or 22.4 percent, applied to non-teaching salaries such as those for administrators, para-professionals, clerical and custodial staff.

Chart 9-1

Woburn Public Schools
Salary Expenditures Compared to Total School District Expenditures
(in millions of dollars)

	FY89	FY93	FY96	FY98	FY93 - FY98 $ Incr. / Decr.	FY93 - FY98 % Incr. / Decr.
Total School District Expenditures	$28.6	$27.3	$28.2	$31.7	$4.5	16.4%
Total Salaries	$16.6	$18.5	$20.1	$22.2	$3.7	20.2%
as % of Total Expenditures	58.2%	67.7%	71.3%	70.0%	83.5%	
Teaching Salaries	$12.1	$13.8	$15.2	$16.7	$2.9	21.0%
as % of Total Salaries	72.8%	74.9%	75.8%	75.3%	77.6%	
Non-Teaching Salaries	$4.5	$4.6	$4.9	$5.5	$0.8	18.1%
as % of Total Salaries	27.2%	25.1%	24.2%	24.7%	22.4%	

Note: Data obtained from WPS. Percentages may not add due to rounding.

Chart 9-2 shows that the average teacher's salary increased from $44,805 to $48,591 between FY93 and FY98. The FY98 average teacher's salary of $48,591 is above the state average salary of $44,051 reported by DOE. For FY98, according to WPS officials, approximately 76 percent of teachers are at the top step.

Chart 9-2

Woburn Public Schools
Teaching Salaries and Teachers (FTE)
Average Salary Comparison

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Teaching Salaries ($ in mil)	$12.1	$13.8	$14.9	$14.7	$15.2	$16.0	$16.7
FTE - Teachers	358.2	308.5	324.5	316.5	345.0	349.5	344.1
FTE Incr. / Decr. from Previous Year	0	44.7	16	-8	28.5	4.5	-5.4
Average Salary per FTE	$33,800	$44,805	$45,970	$46,501	$44,167	$45,846	$48,591
DOE Reported State Average	N/A	$38,681	$39,012	$40,718	$41,760	$42,874	$44,051

Note: FTE excludes adult education teachers. Average salary per FTE consists of all salaries (i.e. asst principals, advisors, coaches etc.), step increases, longevity and differentials. Data obtained from WPS and DOE end-of-year reports.

Of the additional $2.9 million spent for teaching salaries between FY93 and FY98 as shown in *Chart 9-2a*, $1.0 million or 35 percent represents the cost of new positions and $2.2 million or 76 percent represents salary increases for existing teaching staff. The chart further indicates that actual salary expenses were less than expected assuming a three percent inflation rate. *Chart 9-2b,* however, indicates an average contracted salary requirement of slightly greater than three percent during this time period. Cost savings in staffing may have been realized by hiring replacement teachers at less than the average salary of those retiring and/or resigning.

Chart 9-2a

Woburn Public Schools
Salary Expenditures
Estimated Cost of New Positions and Salary Increases
(in millions of dollars)

	FY93	FY98	% of Cum. Incr.
Total Teaching Salary Exp.	$13.8	$16.7	
Cumulative Increase from FY93		$2.9	100%
Est. Cost of 3% Inflationary Increase		$2.2	76%
Est. FY93-FY98 Cost of New Positions		$1.0	35%
Subtotal		$3.2	110%
Est. Amount above 3% Annual Increase		-$0.3	-10%

Note: Analysis based on data obtained from WPS

Chart 9-2b indicates that increases due to annual contracts and steps ranged between 4.1 percent and 13.5 percent from the 1993 to 1998 time period. WPS teachers worked without a contract in FY95.

Chart 9-2b

Woburn Public Schools
Teachers Salaries - Step and Contract Percent Increases

Period	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	**Total**
Annual Contract Increase	9.4%	6.0%	0.0%	1.9%	4.0%	5.1%	26.4%
Step Increase	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	27.3%
Total	13.5%	10.1%	4.1%	6.9%	9.0%	10.1%	53.7%

Note: Data obtained from WPS

In 1996, WPS moved from a 12 step salary scale to a 13 step salary scale. If a teacher moved from a step 12 to a step 13, the teacher received a 10 percent step increase.

As shown in *Chart 9-3*, a review of salary changes over the FY93 to FY98 period indicates that the top step salary level increased by 28.7 percent without including step increases or lane changes. This represents the minimum increase a full time teacher would receive exclusive of raises due to step changes or obtaining an advanced academic degree. In contrast, the state and local government implicit price deflator indicates about an 11.3 percent inflationary trend for the FY93 to FY98 period.

Chart 9-3 shows how WPS salary schedules might apply to a particular teacher for the period of FY93 to FY98 depending on the step and academic degree. Various examples outline different situations. The chart illustrates so-called lane changes due to degree earned such as BA to BA+30 and an MA to MA+30.

For example, as of FY93, teacher A was on the maximum step 12 and had a BA. By FY98, this teacher on step 13 received salary increases totaling to 28.7 percent. If this teacher earned 30 additional credits and changed salary lane to BA+30 during this period, the increase would have amounted to 35.8 percent.

Teacher B had a BA, step 8, in FY93. In FY98, this teacher was on step 13 and received a salary increase of 55.7 percent. Had this teacher earned 30 additional credits and changed salary lane during this period, the increase would have amounted to 64.3 percent.

Teacher C entered WPS with a BA at step 1 in FY93. By FY98, this teacher reached step 6 and received a 36.8 percent increase in pay. By earning the next contract salary lane of a BA+30, the percent increase in salary would have reached 46.8 percent.

Chart 9-3

Woburn Public Schools
Teaching Staff
Step/Degree Summary - Selected Years

	FY93 Base Pay		FY98 Base Pay			FY93-98 % Change	
	Step	Base Pay BA	Step	Base Pay BA	BA + 30	BA	BA + 30
Teacher A	12	$36,534	13	$47,029	$49,631	28.7%	35.8%
Teacher B	8	$30,210	13	$47,029	$49,631	55.7%	64.3%
Teacher C	1	$23,622	6	$32,320	$34,674	36.8%	46.8%
		MA		MA	MA + 30	MA	MA + 30
Teacher A	12	$39,564	13	$50,930	$53,359	28.7%	34.9%
Teacher B	8	$33,232	13	$50,930	$53,359	53.3%	60.6%
Teacher C	1	$25,319	6	$35,851	$38,069	41.6%	50.4%

Note: BA - Bachelor degree; MA - Master degree In FY96, WPS added a 13th step to their contract. Data obtained from WPS.

Chart 9-4

Woburn Public Schools
Teaching Salary Schedules
Comparison of FY93 through FY98 Salary Schedules

Salary Lane	Initial Entry Level - Step 1					
	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
BA	$23,622	$25,039	$25,039	$25,289	$26,311	$27,643
BA + 15	$23,622	$25,039	$25,039	$25,389	$26,311	$27,643
BA + 30	$24,311	$25,770	$25,770	$26,028	$27,079	$28,450
M/B + 45	$25,319	$26,838	$26,838	$27,106	$28,201	$29,629
M + 15	$26,327	$27,907	$27,907	$28,186	$29,325	$30,809
M + 30	$27,212	$28,845	$28,845	$29,133	$30,310	$31,845
Salary	Highest Level - Step 12			Highest Level - Step 13		
Lane	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
BA	$36,534	$38,726	$38,726	$43,025	$44,763	$47,029
BA + 15	$37,403	$39,647	$39,647	$44,048	$45,828	$48,148
BA + 30	$38,556	$40,869	$40,869	$45,406	$47,240	$49,631
M/B + 45	$39,564	$41,938	$41,938	$46,593	$48,476	$50,930
M + 15	$40,568	$43,002	$43,002	$47,775	$49,705	$52,221
M + 30	$41,451	$43,938	$43,938	$48,815	$50,787	$53,359

Note: WPS has 6 salary lanes: BA - Bachelor degree, BA + 15, BA + 30, MA - Master degree or BA + 45, MA + 15, MA + 30. In FY96, WPS added a 13th step to their contract. Data obtained from WPS.

10. Courses and Class Sizes

Chart 10-1 shows core class sections and enrollment as well as average class sizes as of September 1997 for the 1997/98 school year. The average enrollment in these sections was 19.5 or less students per class. Math had the smallest average class size with 17.4 students, which social studies had the largest with 19.5 students. All core subjects had some sections with at least 25 students. English was the only subject that had a section with 30 or more students.

Chart 10-1

Woburn Public Schools
High School Classes
1997/98 School Year

Subject	Number of Sections	Total Enrollment	Avg. Enroll. Per Section	Sect. w/ 25-29	Sect. w/ 30 or more	30+ %
English	61	1131	18.5	9	1	1.6%
Math	56	977	17.4	1	0	0.0%
Science	64	1151	18.0	7	0	0.0%
Social Studies	57	1112	19.5	12	0	0.0%

Note: Data obtained from WPS

11. Technology

WPS developed a five-year implementation plan to improve technology for the years 1996 – 2000. DOE approved the plan in November 1996 and the update in December 1996. The plan was developed and drafted by a technology committee comprised of teachers, parents, community members, administrators, school committee representatives, and business and local officials.

According to the WPS Educational Technology Plan, the committee was to conduct annual reviews of the technology program, revise amendments to the technology plan and publicize the results. The committee has not met since the technology plan was created. Funding was to be provided through a combination of an appropriation in the school budget and both state and local grants.

The plan projected that full implementation would cost approximately $5.0 million over five years. The plan is currently in its fourth year and $878,000, or 17.6 percent, has been expended. The plan's objectives have not been met as of this time.

According to DOE's 97/98 statistics, there are 17.2 students per computer, as compared to the state average of 7.2. DOE also notes a low level of Internet access in the classroom, 0.5 percent, as compared to the state average, 40.4 percent. The audit team noted updated information showing 553 computers in the system, as a considerable number were recently donated to WPS by several local businesses and others were recently purchased by the district. However, WPS officials indicated to the audit team that access to these new computers has been delayed due to inadequate technical support.

All of the schools are connected to the Local Area Network (LAN). As for the Wide Area Network (WAN), the Internet is currently used as a mechanism for communication between schools. WPS is in the process of negotiating a permanent link throughout the municipal buildings with RCN. This negotiation will allow access independently from the Internet.

Year 2000 Compliance (Y2K)

The basis of the Y2K issue is that some computer programs that do not have four digits in the date field may read the year 00 as 1900 rather than 2000. WPS officials submitted a written response to an audit team questionnaire indicating that compliance testing has been performed and that remedial plans are in place. However, the district also indicates that compliant software for student records will become available from the vendor in the next two months. Given the time frame, the importance of these records, and the goal of many network administrators to test and to remediate Y2K issues by 6/30/99, the audit team questions the delay in the purchase of this software. WPS' contingency plan is to retain student attendance records in paper format until a compliant student records software system can be purchased.

12. Supplies and Textbooks

Chart 12-1 details total instructional service expenditures by grade level for selected years, details the portion of expenditures for textbooks only and shows annual per student expenditures. Instructional service expenditures include textbooks, supplies and other activities involving the teaching of students and excludes salaries. In verifying the accuracy of these expenditures, the audit team noted that the amount reported to DOE in FY94 for textbook expenditures was incorrect. For the purpose of this chart, the amount for FY94 actual textbook expenditures has been taken from WPS end-of-year accounting records.

According to *Chart 12-1*, total actual expenditures were less in FY98 than they were in FY93 by $136,000 or 18.8 percent. Textbook expenditures increased from $168,000 in FY93 to $207,000 in FY98 while other instructional expenditures decreased from $558,000 in FY93 to $383,000 in FY98. Per student, expenditures for textbooks are higher in FY98 than in FY93 and the opposite is true for other instructional expenditures.

Chart 12-1

Woburn Public Schools
Textbooks and Other Instructional Expenditures
(in thousands of dollars)

	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY93 - FY98 $ Incr.	FY93 - FY98 % Incr.
High School	$214	$38	$161	$173	$111	$136	($78)	-36.4%
Middle School	$182	$52	$105	$122	$118	$119	($63)	-34.4%
Elementary	$202	$110	$209	$209	$204	$205	$3	1.6%
SPED	$128	$125	$128	$85	$88	$129	$1	0.8%
Total	$726	$325	$603	$588	$520	$590	($136)	-18.8%
Textbooks Only	$168	$74	$126	$137	$132	$207	$38	22.8%
Other Expenditures	$558	$251	$478	$451	$389	$383	($175)	-31.3%
Textbooks / Student	$37	$16	$27	$30	$28	$44	$7	19.3%
Exp. / Student	$122	$55	$103	$98	$83	$81	($41)	-33.3%

Note: Data obtained from WPS and DOE.

Textbook selection involves a committee of teachers who pilot textbooks with the assistance of an educational consultant who educates the committee on what ought to be looked for in a textbook. Principals are encouraged to participate in the entire process, but they are not required to do so. Usually, three textbooks are piloted by the committee of teachers who meet together periodically to discuss their progress. The committee votes on which one of the piloted textbooks to select and recommends the result to the assistant superintendent of curriculum. The assistant superintendent then passes on the recommendation to the school committee which makes the final approval for the district.

A systemwide textbook inventory was not available to the audit staff.

13. Test Scores

Test scores are generally above state averages. The assistant superintendent of curriculum oversees all testing. WPS places great importance on utilizing test results as a diagnostic for systemwide assessment. Test scores are scrutinized in great detail in order to address strengths and weaknesses that may exist with students, teachers or the overall curriculum.

SAT scores in 1998 were 1000, slightly below the state average of 1004. The Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), the state's educational testing program from 1988 to 1996, showed that students in grade four and eight had

significant increases in scores of all four subject areas. Results from the 1998 statewide Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) indicate that 91 percent of WPS third graders scored at the higher reading skills levels of "proficient" and "advanced," which is above the statewide average of 74 percent for these skill levels.

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

SAT scores have been slightly below the state average for all years from 1994 through 1998. Scores from 1994 and 1995 cannot be compared to 1996 scores since SAT scores were "recentered" in 1996 resulting in a higher score for that year for all schools and consequently, a higher state average.

Chart 13-1

Woburn Public Schools
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Results

	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998	
SAT Content Areas	WPS	State Avg.	WPS	State Avg.	WPS	State Avg.	WPS	State Avg.	WPS	State Avg.
Verbal	419	426	417	430	483	507	497	508	498	502
Math	468	475	482	477	481	504	504	508	502	502
Total	887	901	899	907	964	1011	1001	1016	1000	1004
WPS - % of State Avg.	98.4%		99.1%		95.4%		98.5%		99.6%	

Note: Data obtained from WPS and DOE

Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

MEAP reports scores in two ways: scaled scores, which range from 1000 to 1600, and proficient levels that are reported as percentage of students in each proficiency. Level 1 is the lowest, level 2 is considered the "passing grade" level, while levels 3 and 4 constitute the more advanced levels of skills.

Proficiency scores for 1992 and 1996 shown in *Chart 13-2* indicate that scores for WPS grade 4 students increased in all four subject areas for levels 2, 3 and 4. Grade 8 proficiency scores also showed increases in levels 2, 3 and 4 with the exception of levels 3 and 4 science. From 1992 to 1996, all grades 4 and 8 level 1 or below proficiency scores decreased. Grade 4 science and social studies led the improvements with 50 percent reductions in the percentage of students scoring at level 1 or below from 1992 to 1996.

Chart 13-2

Woburn Public Schools
MEAP Proficiency Scores
1992 and 1996 Fourth and Eighth Grades

Fourth Grade	1992 Level 1 or Below	1992 Level 2	1992 Levels 3 & 4	1996 Level 1 or Below	1996 Level 2	1996 Levels 3 & 4
Reading	41%	32%	28%	28%	43%	29%
Mathematics	45%	41%	14%	28%	53%	20%
Science	44%	41%	16%	22%	53%	26%
Social Studies	44%	38%	18%	22%	54%	23%
Eighth Grade	**1992 Level 1 or Below**	**1992 Level 2**	**1992 Levels 3 & 4**	**1996 Level 1 or Below**	**1996 Level 2**	**1996 Levels 3 & 4**
Reading	52%	24%	25%	28%	36%	36%
Mathematics	60%	29%	12%	34%	48%	18%
Science	51%	22%	27%	32%	47%	21%
Social Studies	50%	32%	18%	39%	37%	24%

Note: Data provided by DOE and WPS

Between 1988 and 1996, MEAP scores for students in grades 4 and 8 increased significantly in all four subject areas. Furthermore, all scores for grades 4 and 8 increased significantly from 1992 to 1996 as well. Variations of 50 points or more are considered statistically significant. The MEAP scores for all grades tested are shown in *Appendix C*.

Chart 13-3 shows reading scores for grade 4 in selected school districts whose scores in 1988 fell between 1270 and 1330 as compared with WPS' 1300 score. From 1992 to 1996, WPS increased significantly in grade 4 reading. The scores for grade 4 students are particularly significant because, by 1996, these students had experienced education reform initiatives in the early stages of formal education. The greatest impact of education reform should initially be seen in the performance of these students. The reading scores for WPS students have shown improvement in each of the four successive administrations of the test.

Chart 13-3

MEAP Reading Scores - 4th Grade- 1988 Scores from 1270 - 1330

	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1992 - 1996 Change
Everett	1270	1270	1270	1270	1440	170
Peabody	1270	1310	1360	1390	1370	10
Gardner	1270	1280	1280	1320	1330	50
Swansea	1270	1310	1350	1370	1330	-20
Rockland	1280	1320	1340	1350	1360	20
Billerica	1280	1350	1390	1390	1340	-50
Gloucester	1280	1330	1390	1380	1330	-60
Revere	1280	1280	1260	1300	1310	50
Attleboro	1290	1310	1300	1290	1370	70
Pittsfield	1290	1370	1370	1400	1370	0
Leominster	1290	1270	1260	1320	1310	50
Norwood	1300	1360	1360	1440	1410	50
Woburn	**1300**	**1320**	**1350**	**1410**	**1420**	**70**
Sandwich	1300	1380	1350	1410	1410	60
Dracut	1300	1310	1350	1400	1400	50
Milford	1300	1270	1310	1330	1330	20
Randolph	1300	1300	1290	1320	1320	30
Braintree	1310	1360	1380	1410	1430	50
Hudson	1310	1330	1390	1390	1390	0
Weymouth	1310	1330	1330	1370	1380	50
Bourne	1310	1320	1390	1370	1370	-20
Marlborough	1310	1310	1400	1400	1360	-40
Fairhaven	1310	1270	1260	1320	1330	70
Amesbury	1310	1350	1360	1350	1290	-70
Easthampton	1310	1240	1300	1290	1260	-40
Northampton	1320	1300	1360	1350	1390	30
Stoughton	1320	1340	1360	1450	1380	20
North Attleboro	1320	1370	1390	1400	1370	-20
Stoneham	1320	1330	1390	1390	1370	-20
Plymouth	1320	1360	1380	1420	1360	-20
Middleborough	1320	1300	1320	1310	1350	30
West Springfield	1320	1310	1300	1310	1330	30
Dedham	1330	1370	1330	1390	1410	80
Somerset	1330	1310	1320	1400	1410	90
Winthrop	1330	1300	1350	1350	1390	40
Westfield	1330	1340	1360	1330	1350	-10
Salem	1330	1290	1370	1370	1310	-60
State Average	**1300**	**1310**	**1330**	**1300**	**1350**	20

Note: A significant change in a score is considered to be 50 points in either direction. Selected communities were chosen based on geography and/or population.

Iowa Tests

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Iowa tests) for the third grade was administered throughout Massachusetts in the spring of 1998. Results were categorized by students

tested under routine conditions, students with disabilities tested under non-routine conditions and students with limited English proficiency. WPS' overall total percentile rank in reading for all students tested under routine conditions was 76 - above the statewide score of 64. The test defines four different levels of reading comprehension; pre-reader, basic reader, proficient reader and advanced reader. Pre-readers and basic readers made up 6 percent of tested students while proficient and advanced readers made up 91 percent of all students who were tested in WPS. The state averages for pre-readers and basic and for proficient and advanced readers were 24 percent and 74 percent respectively. About 85 percent of the tested students have attended WPS since the first grade.

The Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED), also referred to as the Massachusetts Grade 10 Achievement Test, was administered in the spring of 1997. It tested seven different areas of skills including reading, quantitative thinking and social studies. Scores were based on a national sample of students who took the test. WPS grade 10 students scored at the 65th percentile compared to the national sample. WPS' performance compares to scores as high as the 89th percentile and as low as the 28th percentile for other Massachusetts school districts. Beginning in 1998, WPS administered the ITED to grade 9 students, rather than to grade 10 students, for the purpose of utilizing test results for grade 10 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test preparation.

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System

MCAS scores show that WPS scored above the state average scaled scores for all students in grades 4, 8 and 10. Also, all scores for students attending the district for three years or more were above the state average scaled scores.

MCAS is the new statewide assessment program administered annually to grades 4, 8 and 10. It measures performance of students, schools and districts on learning standards contained in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and fulfills the requirements of education reform. This assessment program serves two purposes:

- measures performance of students and schools against established state standards; and
- improves effective classroom instruction by providing feedback about instruction and modeling assessment approaches for classroom use.

MCAS tests are reported according to performance levels that describe student performance in relation to established state standards. Students earn a separate performance level of advanced, proficient, needs improvement or failing based on their total scaled score for each test completed. There is no overall classification of student performance across content areas. School, district and state levels are reported by performance levels.

Chart 13-4 reflects performance level percentages for all WPS students in tested grades. *Appendix D* provides additional detail for students who have attended schools in the school district for at least three years.

Chart 13-4

Woburn Public Schools
MCAS Test Scores
Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level

All Students	Advanced	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Failing (Tested)	Failing (Absent)	Average Scaled Score	State Avg. Scaled Score
Grade 4:							
English Language Arts	2	34	61	3	0	237	230
Mathematics	15	31	44	9	0	240	234
Science & Technology	11	55	31	3	0	244	238
Grade 8:							
English Language Arts	3	69	25	3	0	243	237
Mathematics	8	33	37	22	0	234	227
Science & Technology	1	36	41	22	0	232	225
Grade 10:							
English Language Arts	4	48	38	10	0	238	230
Mathematics	4	20	38	37	1	226	222
Science & Technology	1	31	52	16	1	232	225

Note: Data provided by DOE

14. Management

Management Practices

During 1995, the current Superintendent initiated the development of a new systemwide mission statement and educational direction. A strategic planning steering committee made up of representatives from the school, business and local government met and along with a series of community forums and school committee approvals developed a mission statement, defined student competencies and established five systemwide goals.

The Superintendent sets annual district and personal goals which are approved by the school committee based on the five systemwide goals. The Superintendent is evaluated by the school committee based on the district's progress toward meeting the annual goals. From the annual goals, the Superintendent sets individual goals for the assistant superintendent for curriculum, the business manager and principals.

The Woburn school committee meets biweekly. The Superintendent, assistant superintendent and the business manager attend these meetings. Principals are not required to attend, however, a presentation is usually made by one of the schools at each meeting. The Superintendent meets with all principals on the next day following

a school committee meeting to discuss the events of the meeting. In addition to the school committee meetings, the three school committee sub-committees (finance, resource and personnel) meet weekly.

Hiring Process

WPS uses a contractual transfer system or "pool" to fill projected teaching vacancies in the next school year. Jobs in the pool are bid by interested teachers on the next to the last workday in June. Selection for pool positions is based exclusively on certification and seniority not on teaching experience or principal's preference.

Teaching positions not filled internally are advertised in major local newspapers, at local colleges and at placement services. The assistant superintendent, principal and appropriate department head, if applicable, screen resumes and interview candidates. The Superintendent meets with the recommended applicant and offers the position. All teaching positions filled from outside the system are budgeted as first or second step teachers.

The district advertises principal vacancies in major local newspapers and with the appropriate National Association of Principals. The Superintendent forms a search committee to paper-screen applications and develop a series of questions for all candidates. The committee interviews the applicants and may visit the desired candidate's school. The selected candidate meets with the school committee to provide the Superintendent with additional input before the position is offered.

The audit team examined the individual contracts of the district's 12 principals, the Superintendent, the assistant superintendent for curriculum, the business manager and the directors of facilities, technology and special education. All principal contracts are for three years in duration and begin on the same date.

15. Accounting and Reporting

The audit team traced a sample of expenditures reported to DOE to WPS accounting and budget records of the business manager. The audit team examined the last two years of invoices. The audit team also met separately with WPS staff, the city auditor, the city purchasing agent and a representative of the Certified Public Accounting firm which audits the city. The audit team was satisfied that adequate safeguards exist for proper internal controls. Based upon a sample, expenditure reports were generally an accurate representation of WPS expenditures.

There appears to be a good working relationship between school and city offices. The school district does not have a separate financial audit. The annual audit of the school district is included in the citywide audit. The audit disclosed that two WPS employees were receiving a monthly travel stipend and that although 1099s were issued, W-2s would be more appropriate.

The audit team noted that the school committee has not been approving payrolls before the city auditor's office receives them. The DLS has ruled that even after the passage of education reform, the school committee remains the head of the school department for approving bills and payrolls under M.G.L. Ch.41 §§41 and 56. The audit team found sufficient offsetting controls to mitigate the potential of inappropriate expenditure of funds including the city auditor's expenditure review. By law, the school committee has fiscal oversight responsibility. We therefore suggest that WPS and the city of Woburn review this process.

16. Review of Expenditures

The audit team completed a review of WPS expenditures and purchasing controls and analyzed the accounting and selected accounts from the General Ledger for FY97 and FY98. The review showed that purchasing procedures and controls are in place and are utilized. Separation of duties and responsibilities is maintained throughout the school system and the city auditor provides general oversight and audit review. The Woburn treasurer's office issues payroll and vendor checks.

17. High School Accreditation

Woburn High School (WHS) is accredited. The accreditation visit by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) took place in October of 1997. NEASC required a special progress report for ten "specific concerns of the visiting committee". These concerns were that the high school:

- provide adequate financial resources for the media services budget;
- relieve the media specialist of audio-visual responsibilities;
- redesign and equip the library including such things as online card catalogue, a security system, networking and additional Internet access;
- develop and implement long-range plans and timelines for the completion of ongoing maintenance projects;
- meet ADA standards throughout the campus;
- install exterior ventilation for the operation of the kiln;
- store hazardous chemicals securely in a safe place;
- correct the lack of ventilation in the nurses' office;
- replace unusable water fountains throughout the building; and
- eliminate interference of instructional time by restricting PA announcements.

The status of these concerns is identified in *Chart 17-1*. WPS continues to develop a plan to address the remainder of the recommendations.

Chart 17-1

Woburn Public Schools
Status of 10 Key Accreditation Recommendations

Area	NEASC Rec's	Completed	In Progress	Rejected	Not Required	Planned for the Future
Statement of Purpose	6					
Curriculum and Instruction	30					
Student Services	12					
Library Tech. & Media	8	1	1			1
Admin., Faculty & Staff	22					
School Facilities	21	1	2			3
Community Support	4					
Financial Support	16					
School Climate	2	1				
Assessment of Educational Progress	9					
Total	130	3	3	0	0	4

Note: Data obtained from WPS

18. Grade 3 Transiency

Student transiency is generally defined as the percentage of students who enter and/or leave the system after the first day of school. Transiency poses an educational problem because students may lose the benefit of a sequential and coherent school program as they move from school to school.

According to *Chart 18-1*, of the 14 communities of similar population to Woburn, WPS has a relatively low transiency percentage, 15.2 percent, below the statewide average of 19.6 percent. WPS has a relatively high stable population percent of grade 3 students who attended WPS in grades 1, 2 and 3. This stability percentage, 84.8 percent, is above the statewide average of 80.4 percent.

Chart 18-1

Transiency and Stability - 3rd Grade
Selected Communities
Student Population Participating in the 1998 Iowa 3rd Grade Reading Test

Community	Stable Population	Total Population	Stable Population Percent	Transiency Percent
Leominster	316	424	74.5%	25.5%
Braintree	267	346	77.2%	22.8%
Beverly	291	375	77.6%	22.4%
Fitchburg	326	416	78.4%	21.6%
Natick	242	307	78.8%	21.2%
Andover	355	445	79.8%	20.2%
Westfield	335	418	80.1%	19.9%
Salem	305	378	80.7%	19.3%
Everett	328	402	81.6%	18.4%
Marlborough	268	327	82.0%	18.0%
Chelmsford	370	451	82.0%	18.0%
Attleboro	421	501	84.0%	16.0%
Woburn	**301**	**355**	**84.8%**	**15.2%**
Watertown	151	173	87.3%	12.7%
Billerica	418	475	88.0%	12.0%
Statewide	54,047	67,233	80.4%	19.6%

Note: Student population includes only students tested under "routine" conditions.
Data obtained from DOE's 1998 Iowa Grade 3 reading test summary results.

19. Special Education and Transitional Bilingual Education

Special Education (SPED)

According to *Chart 19-1*, WPS had a SPED participation rate of 16.1 percent in FY98, 0.5 percentage points lower than the state average of 16.6 percent reported by DOE. As a percentage of the total enrollment, SPED enrollment has averaged 17.6 percent during the 1990's, but has decreased since the 1994 high. The number and percentage of substantially separate students has also decreased since this time. District officials suggest that these decreases are due to better training and screening in the pre-referral program.

Chart 19-1

Woburn Public Schools
SPED Enrollment
Based on October 1 Reports

School Year Ending	Total Enrollment	Total SPED	SPED as % of Total Enrollment	Substantially Separate	Substantially Separate as % of SPED
1991	4,391	773	17.6%	86	11.1%
1992	4,529	822	18.1%	112	13.6%
1993	4,619	849	18.4%	101	11.9%
1994	4,610	861	18.7%	101	11.7%
1995	4,658	840	18.0%	91	10.8%
1996	4,640	816	17.6%	65	8.0%
1997	4,716	751	15.9%	51	6.8%
1998	4,721	762	16.1%	63	8.3%

Note: Data obtained from WPS

Inclusion of SPED students in regular education classrooms occurs throughout all grades in the district. Many classes utilize a co-teaching strategy where all students are taught collectively by a regular education teacher and a SPED teacher.

The Learning Center at WHS is a study center operated by the SPED department with assistance from regular education teachers and peer tutors. The center is a place where SPED and regular education students can interact, study, use a computer or be tutored by teachers or National Honor Society members who volunteer their time during free periods. The Learning Center has replaced the library as the primary place where students go during the school day to study or to work independently.

"High expectations" is a WHS program designed to provide a positive and emotionally supportive academic environment to students with psychiatric needs. This program promotes individual responsibility in a more structured environment. High expectations uses a level system (1-4) to represent a student's standard of behavior. Each level also has particular privileges that serve as a reward system for students. All students enter in level two and will hopefully progress to level four where students are able to function fairly independently. Each student operates on an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and is placed into mainstream classes whenever possible. The program is staffed by three SPED teachers, one para-professional, one social worker and a part-time clinical psychologist. The curriculum includes English, mathematics, science, social studies and decision-making. The decision-making class teaches the thinking skills needed when dealing with real-life issues such as drugs and alcohol, violence, teen pregnancy, and social skills. Students are also involved in a variety of community service projects to allow students to receive recognition.

According to *Chart 19-2*, the increase in SPED costs from FY93 to FY98 was $1.2 million, or 32.4 percent, while the increase in total school district expenditures reported

to DOE for the same period was $4.5 million, or 16.4 percent. SPED expenditures for FY93 increased from 13.2 percent of total school district expenditures to 15.0 percent in FY98. WPS is a member of the SEEM (Special Education of Education Mutual) collaborative which provides services to children with low incident special needs. Currently, WPS needs to tuition out some students because the space does not exist on the elementary level to service all children. WPS also receives tuitioned in students from other collaborative members for their pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grade 1 PDD (Pervasive Developmental Disorders/Autism) program.

Chart 19-2

Woburn Public Schools
Total SPED Expenditures as Reported to DOE
(in whole dollars)

				FY93-FY98	
	FY89	FY93	FY98	$ Incr. / Decr.	% Incr. / Decr.
SPED Program	$ 2,873,206	$ 3,262,837	$ 4,134,653	$ 871,816	26.7%
SPED Transportation	$ 417,612	$ 332,026	$ 626,337	$ 294,311	88.6%
Total SPED	$ 3,290,818	$ 3,594,863	$ 4,760,990	$ 1,166,127	32.4%

Note: Data obtained from WPS

Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)

WPS does not have a bilingual program. WPS has an English as a Second Language (ESL) program that involves 60 K-12 students and three ESL teachers for the 1998/99 school year.

20. Dropout and Truancy

Chart 20-1 identifies Woburn's dropout rates from FY93 to FY97 in comparison to the state average and to the average of 14 communities of similar population to Woburn. Woburn's dropout rate was 1.3 percent in FY97, significantly less than the state average of 3.4 percent. According to the chart, WPS has the fourth lowest dropout rate of the 14 selected communities.

A Community Based Justice (CBJ) program is run through the Middlesex County District Attorney's office. CBJ brings WHS faculty/guidance together with representatives of Woburn's police department, housing authority, probation department of the Woburn District Court, the Department of Social Services and psychologists. CBJ meets once a month and deals with issues involving school attendance, runaways and truants.

The alternative education program, generally for students in grades 11 and 12, requires students to take one half-day of English, mathematics, science and social studies. All students in the program are required to have a job. Student employment is monitored closely by the school to ensure that students meet this requirement.

WPS's two assistant principals are responsible for calling the home of any student with an unexcused absence. A student with an unexcused absence is immediately suspended from school until that student is accompanied back to school by a parent/guardian. Saturday school is an alternative to suspension and is used in cases of chronic absences. WPS truant officer is a retired policeman.

Chart 20-1

High School Dropout Rates
Selected Communities
FY93 - FY97

Community	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97
Salem	6.5%	4.7%	5.3%	5.9%	6.3%
Beverly	2.9%	6.3%	6.1%	6.6%	5.5%
Attleboro	6.5%	6.8%	7.9%	5.9%	5.0%
Marlborough	2.4%	4.4%	2.9%	2.4%	4.3%
Leominster	5.4%	4.5%	4.8%	5.0%	4.0%
Everett	5.0%	3.7%	3.5%	4.1%	3.9%
Westfield	5.0%	4.1%	5.7%	5.4%	2.9%
Watertown	2.5%	2.8%	2.3%	1.7%	2.0%
Fitchburg	3.4%	3.2%	2.0%	2.9%	1.6%
Braintree	1.0%	1.6%	1.3%	1.4%	1.5%
Billerica	0.8%	1.7%	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%
Woburn	**N/A**	**1.1%**	**2.4%**	**1.0%**	**1.3%**
Chelmsford	0.6%	0.9%	1.3%	0.5%	0.9%
Natick	0.6%	1.1%	1.6%	1.1%	0.8%
Andover	0.8%	0.9%	1.4%	1.3%	0.6%
Average These Communities	3.1%	3.2%	3.3%	3.1%	2.8%
Median These Communities	2.7%	3.2%	2.4%	2.4%	2.0%
State Average	3.5%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%	3.4%

Note: Data provided by DOE

21. Maintenance and Capital Improvement

Maintenance

The audit team made site visits to five of the nine elementary schools, one of the two middle schools, and the high school.

- A February 1999 facilities analysis conducted by an architectural firm indicated that all of the schools had poor air quality, water damage, bathrooms in need of renovations and that they were in need of painting. The analysis noted that many of the schools had poor lighting in various areas and that one elementary school experienced structural damage due to settling. This same elementary school had reports of asthma, sickness and a mold problem. Many teachers, according to the analysis, refused to teach there. A musty smell was evident to the audit team during the site visit to this school. In fact, a smell of this sort was evident to the audit team during a visit to a second elementary school.

- On site visits, the audit team found that most floors, walls and ceilings were clean but appeared to be in need of minor repairs.

WPS officials indicated to the audit team that the maintenance budget was oftentimes reduced to supplement other areas of the budget. As a result, there has been a lack of custodial supplies and contracted services. The district currently employs 39 custodial staff and a three-person maintenance crew. The director of facilities, employed by the district for about one year, is currently requiring that all custodians attend a training session on cleaning practices and is implementing a preventive maintenance program.

Capital Improvement

Included in the February 1999 school facilities analysis was a school facility feasibility study that divided a long range capital improvement plan into two phases. Phase I, with a net estimated cost of $10,477,088, included building one new elementary school, repairing both middle schools and performing ADA upgrades on the high school. Phase II determined the suitability of all remaining elementary schools and of the high school to decide future educational needs of the district. The analysis recognized that phase II would likely proceed over a 7 - 10 year period.

Each school submits a request for capital improvement each year. The list is prioritized, and included into the school committee budget. Throughout the year projects are completed on a priority basis. If an emergency arises, certain capital projects are cut to supply funds for the emergency.

The district currently owns three modular classrooms at one elementary school, and one more at another elementary. Currently, the modulars serve as two libraries and two classrooms.

22. School Improvement Planning

Chapter 71, §59C .MGL, requires that a school council be established and that the principal of each school, in consultation with the school, council, annually identify the educational needs of the students attending the school, review the school budget and formulate a school improvement plan.

The review of the district's school improvement plans as well as interviews with principals, teachers and school council members verified the existence of school councils at each of Woburn's public schools, most of which also meet the parity membership requirement.

The purpose of the school council is not well understood in Woburn, and this has impeded its development. Councils do not meet on a regular basis, and there is little evidence of development of a collaborative effort between educator and parent members. In interviews school council members reported a lack of understanding of their mission, their role in district reform efforts, and their responsibilities, a limitation reflected in school improvement plans that fail to adequately address the required elements.

There is wide variability in the district's process for site-based needs-assessment and the subsequent development of individual school improvement plans. Documentation provided by the Superintendent on 9/24/99 to the DOE included copies of surveys developed by the following schools at the times noted:

Kennedy Middle Schools	February 1996
White School	Feb. – March 1996
Clapp School	December 1998
Reeves School	No date indicated

There is little documentary evidence of other methods and strategies used at the school level for continuous improvement planning efforts. Interviews revealed that most of the councils had not seen the data or documentation needed to perform such an assessment. According to school council members, teachers and principals, the councils do not review the annual school budget, indicating no coordination between planned school improvement initiatives and budget allocation.

There is no district-wide process in place for the Woburn Public Schools to monitor the development, approval, and implementation of its school improvement. There is no accountability to ensure that a plan is completed for each school. Documentation provided by the Superintendent on 9/24/99 to the DOE included minutes of six Woburn School Committee meetings where approval of individual school improvement plans was completed for 7 of the 12 schools in the district over a period of time beginning on March 30, 1994 through April 24, 1995. Interviews with school administrators and teachers also confirmed that the school improvement plans for all schools were neither reviewed nor approved by the school committee, with the exception of the high school plan, which had been reviewed to fulfill the accreditation requirement.

School improvement plans reviewed by the on-site team did not articulate specific building objectives or activities aimed at reaching them. The plans showed little development of timelines, person(s) responsible for particular activities or objectives, resources required to accomplish goals, or the indicators to be used to gauge success. The school improvement plans reviewed were lists of needs generated by the principal of each school, rather than a collaborative analysis by a group of parents and educators to develop specific short and long term goals as called for in Chapter 71, section 59C.

School councils have been established at each school and are in the early stages of development. The process for organization and renewal of school councils varies from building to building and is not governed by district guidelines. Currently, most school councils are not clearly focused on assessment of student performance needs, educational or budgetary policies of the district, or on the development of school-based plans to advance student learning needs. As a result, school improvement plans show little indication of analysis of school data, identification of educational plans, or the subsequent development of measurable goals. The team saw no evidence of a district process for monitoring the implementation of school improvement plans, and the connection of these plans to district planning remains unclear.

23. Student Learning Time

Chapter 69, Section 1G, MGL, and regulations adopted by the Board of Education pursuant to that section [603 CMR 27.00] require Massachusetts public schools to operate for a minimum of 180 student days per year. Districts must ensure that every elementary student attending its schools is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year, and that every secondary student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year, of structured learning time.

Review of the Woburn Public Schools Learning Time Implementation Plan submitted to the Department of Education shows compliance with minimum learning time standards at all levels.

Although the learning time requirements at all levels are met on paper, the students at the middle and high school 990 hours of structured learning time. Interviews at the middle school reveal that it is impossible in many cases for students to reach their classes punctually with a two minute passing period, making late arrivals a common occurrence. The students at the middle and high school who eat during second lunch lose the allotted minutes of structured learning time for their fifth period class. There has been no time set aside in the schedule to allow for passing between fifth period and lunch, or for going back to fifth period after lunch. Even at the elementary level, where compliance was reached through the addition of a five minute block at the beginning of the school day, actual student learning time has not been increased.

The Woburn Public Schools are providing the minimum standards for the time and learning requirements from kindergarten through grade twelve. The district reached compliance at the high school by paring minutes out of non-instructional periods, such as lunchtime or class passing time. At the elementary levels, the district added five minutes to the start of the school day. Although these adjustments brought the district into compliance, there needs to be a commitment to creating meaningful increases in additional student learning time. Document review and interviews suggest that district concern about the budgetary impact of collective bargaining changes are an obstacle to extending the day and time requirements.

24. Personnel Evaluations

Chapter 71, Section 38,MGL, requires that all school districts establish comprehensive performance evaluation systems for all teachers, administrators and principals that the district employs. Performance standards must be based upon the Principles of Effective Teaching and Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership adopted by the Board of Education. However, school committees, in conjunction with their Superintendent of Schools, may require supplemental performance standards.

Evaluation of Teachers and Supervisory Personnel

The process of evaluating teachers, revised effective September 1997, involves a pre-observation meeting, classroom observations, a post-observation conference between

the teacher and observer and a summation evaluation. Each part of the process has a specific function.

1. Pre-Observation Meeting – requires the completion of a form that includes the subject to be taught and observed, type of lesson, goals of the lesson, date and time to be observed, identification of the observer and appropriate signatures.

2. Observation – Written observations shall be completed for all teaching members according to the following schedule:
   a. Non professional teacher status staff will be observed three times per year, the first shall occur no later than December 1; the second shall occur before the end of January; the third shall occur before March 1.
   b. Professional teacher status staff shall be evaluated once every other year. The observations shall occur no later than March 1.

   The observation process has two parts. One part includes the seven principles of effective teaching adopted by the State Board of Education and includes descriptions of each principle. The observer needs to identify whether the standards have been met or further development is needed. The evaluator must write specific suggestions if development is needed. The second part of the classroom observation process requires the observer to complete a narrative reflecting what was observed during the lesson.

3. Conference – Before a report is written regarding the observation, a conference will be held within two days of the observation between the observer and the teacher to discuss the lesson. The observation form is then completed after the conference assessment. Within five days of the conference, the completed form must be presented to the teacher for signature and comment. The teacher should return the signed form to the observer within two school days of receiving it.

4. Summation Evaluation – This will be completed for staff with non-professional teacher status by the first week in March and for staff with professional teacher status by March 30. Within five school days following receipt of the summation evaluation, the teacher returns the signed forms to the observer. The summation evaluation form consists of two standards that are examined by a narrative rating system.

The two possible ratings are Professional Standards of Excellence have been met, or Development Needed. The evaluator/observer indicates by a check mark whether the standards are met or development is needed in Teacher Effectiveness as Related to the Seven Principles of Effective Teaching, and Fulfills all other contractual responsibilities. If development is needed in one of these areas, documentation is required. There is an agreed upon procedure for handling day to day or continuing problems of an instructional nature with teachers.

Review of the collective bargaining agreement between the school committee and the teacher association, effective September 1, 1998 to August 31, 2001, shows no reference to the evaluation procedure or the revised evaluation instrument, although

document reviews confirmed the procedures and forms have been in use. Discussions with senior managers failed to produce a memorandum of agreement or its equivalent with the association regarding the adoption and implementation of the performance standards in accordance with M.G.L. c. 150E. However, the Superintendent stated that the Association was aware of the revision and was given the opportunity to provide input in the development of the instrument and the procedures for implementation.

The sample of teacher evaluations provided by the district for review varied in quality. It was evident to the on-site team that the evaluation procedure is not consistently applied. Some evaluation forms were incomplete and lacked key elements, including signatures. In interviews, teachers confirmed this inconsistency. Some teachers stated that no pre-observation meetings were convened, and others indicated that no post-observation conferences were held. One teacher reported not having been observed for a number of years. Interviews with principals and the Superintendent confirmed that a one day training workshop on teacher evaluation was conducted by the district in the summer of 1996.

According to the Superintendent, senior managers send copies of all evaluations to the central office for review. Principals notify the Superintendent whenever an evaluation requires further action. No summary of the evaluation results is given to the School committee.

Based on a review of the completed evaluations and interviews with teachers and administrators, it is apparent that while Woburn has a well-developed teacher performance evaluation procedure, the district has not implemented that system. There is a need for updated and ongoing training for the evaluators to ensure consistency in the application of teacher evaluation standards and procedures, and the use of evaluation reports to inform planning for professional development.

Evaluation of School Principals

The on-site team reviewed the three year employment contracts for each of the districts' principals, effective July 1, 1997 to June 30, 2000, and the documents outlining the Administration Performance Appraisal Program for Principals. Elementary principals work 190 days per year, middle school and high school principals work 213 days. All of the principals' contracts state that they be available beyond normal work hours for meetings with the school committee, central administration, school councils, and other functions assigned by, or under direction of, the Superintendent.

The appraisal program states that effective July 1, 1999, salaries of school administrators shall be commensurate with their performance level. The appraisal program evaluates each principal's level of performance annually in two parts:

Part I: Implementation of system-wide and/or building objectives are mutually set between the principal and Superintendent during the first two months of school with a mid-year progress review prior to February 1.

Part II: Proficiency in Meeting Performance Standards. In effectively conducting this part, the Superintendent calls on a variety of information sources to establish a basis for his assessment.

The district's approved guidelines call for the evaluator to complete the annual performance evaluation by June 15. The performance standards for evaluating principals are consistent with the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership adopted by the State Board of Education.

Review of sample principal evaluations showed no evidence that Part I was completed during the 1998-99 school year. According to interviews with the principals and senior managers, the Superintendent receives self-evaluation documentation from the principals by June 15, which becomes the basis for the Superintendent's determinations of level of performance. Early in the fall, Part II of the evaluation process is completed and reported to the principal. In this document, the Superintendent makes a recommendation for a rate of pay based on the principal's performance evaluation.

The Woburn Public School district is not implementing its performance evaluation procedure for principals as described. The evaluation system for principals is not consistently applied. Specifically, Part 1 of the process, which calls for mutual goal-setting between the Superintendent and the principal is inconsistent. Documents submitted by the Superintendent to the DOE on 9/24/99 do include goals set by each of the 12 principals, but in some cases, are not reflective of the current school year.

Evaluation of Senior Managers

The Superintendent, assistant superintendent, business manager, and administrator of special education services each have individual employment contracts with the Woburn School committee.

The Superintendent's three-year contract requires an annual evaluation by the school committee. Review of the school committee minutes and of the results of their evaluation verified that the process had been completed annually, and the results have been reported publicly at the school committee meeting. Newspaper articles, interviews, and document reviews confirm the openness and consistency of the procedure. The Superintendent's compensation is adjusted based on commendable evaluation results.

The assistant superintendent's contract was extended by the school committee in June 1999 until June 30, 2004. The contract will automatically extend for an additional three years terminating on June 30, 2007 unless written notice of termination is issued before July 1, 2003. A review of the contract and interviews substantiated a joint evaluation by the school committee and Superintendent. The assistant superintendent's compensation is also adjusted based on the performance-based evaluation results.

The business manager's contract, extending through December 15, 2000, is jointly evaluated by the school committee and Superintendent in the same manner as the

assistant superintendent's. The process was verified by a review of the contract and interviews.

The administrator of special education services' three year contract extends through June 30, 2000, with an evaluation conducted annually by the Superintendent. The involvement of the school committee in the formal evaluation of the assistant superintendent and business manager is inconsistent with the intent of Education Reform, and is not in compliance with their duties and responsibilities.

In addition, present procedure allows for direct participation of the school committee in evaluating both the assistant superintendent and the business manager, and is not in compliance with their duties and responsibilities and is inconsistent with the intent of Education Reform legislation.

25. Professional Development

Chapter 71, Section 38Q,MGL, requires the school district to adopt and implement a professional development plan for all principals, teachers and professional staff employed by the district. It further requires that the plan be updated and revised annually. Districts' professional development plans are to include training in the teaching of new curriculum frameworks and other skills required for the effective implementation of the 1993 Education Reform Act.

The Woburn Public Schools' professional development plan for 1993 through 1999 is divided into two parts. Part I is a list of goals developed for three specific groups (10 goals for administrators, 10 goals for teaching staff members, and two goals for non-teaching staff), and do not include evidence of planning activity. Part II of the professional development plan, titled "Methodology," is a narrative description of five phases of development.

Woburn elementary teachers' have historically used two of their five contracted early release days for professional development, either in the form of workshops or grade level meetings. Since middle and high school teachers do not participate in early release days, this is the extent of the professional development required by the district. Appropriate professional development time should be included in the school calendar at all levels.

District personnel stated in interviews that Woburn educators perceive the professional development plan as simply a list of courses offered by the district as a vehicle for recertification. Teacher responses in interviews verified their lack of understanding of the relationship between professional development offerings and school or system improvement needs or plans. Staff reported in interviews that the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction is solely responsible for the planning and implementation of professional development activities in the Woburn schools. They note that the use of staff surveys provides an opportunity for their input and suggestions, but they are not involved at the planning level. There is no district-wide professional development committee.

In 1995, the Superintendent initiated a strategic plan for district-wide improvement for the Woburn Public Schools, which included a mission statement and outlined five strategic goals. The goals are not developed to include planning details with timelines, responsibilities, resources or clear evaluation procedures. Interview notes suggest that teachers do not know if the district's professional development plan is linked to these strategic goals. In fact, most teachers are not familiar with these goals. According to the Superintendent, the first attempt to evaluate progress and update plans occurred at a meeting with the school council on May 27, 1999.

The Woburn Expects Excellence in Education (WE3) document is more familiar to teachers. Referenced in interviews, this broad mission statement outlines the district's expectations of student achievement in the areas of academics, citizenship, personal growth and lifelong learning. However, as in the goals document, there is a lack of planning detail and a tenuous link to professional development offered by the district.

In interviews, the assistant superintendent noted that as a result of the WE3 document, the district will soon embark on a more concentrated planning effort. Each school principal and/or department head will develop a five year plan outlining improvement efforts for each site. Over the summer, these plans will be reviewed at the central office, and an effort will be made to create an overall district planning document which has its foundation in school-based initiatives. However, this effort would not be necessary if the district maximized the existing avenues available through school councils and school improvement plans, consistent with the mandates of Education Reform.

The assistant superintendent maintains records on professional development course selections, dates, participation, and totals of professional development points obtained by staff, summarized annually to provide the school committee with evidence of teacher participation. Data is not disaggregated or analyzed in other ways, and there is no evidence that the district uses this data for planning purposes. The Superintendent corroborated in an interview teachers' current perception that Woburn's professional development has been focused on recertification.

Minutes of Woburn school committee meetings indicate that the committee's involvement in the district's professional development activities is limited to approving course offerings and professional development point values.

According to the assistant superintendent, the Woburn professional development plan will be updated based on analysis of the 1999 MCAS results; she plans to meet with teachers to analyze student performance; and intends to schedule future professional development offerings to address student needs identified through this process.

A multitude of opportunities for staff involvement in professional development activities are offered to Woburn teachers by the district and recertification planning is a clear priority in the district.

While a district professional development plan has been generated by the Woburn schools, there is no system-wide professional development committee to assume responsibility for assessment of professional development needs, collection of pertinent data, or development of appropriate professional development goals and activities. The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction is solely responsible for the planning and implementation of professional development activities in the district. There is no documentation to indicate annual review or revision of the professional development plan. There is no articulated process for aligning personnel evaluation results with the planning of professional development opportunities, except for the assistant superintendent's individual assessment and assimilation of this information. The district functions of personnel evaluation and professional development planning need to be integrated systemically, and need to involve more people in the district.

26. Curriculum Alignment

According to the assistant superintendent, Woburn initiated efforts to align the district's curriculum with state curriculum frameworks as soon as the draft of the common chapters and each of the frameworks were made available by the Department of Education. Extensive teacher training was given on the frameworks' strands and standards, involving grade-level groups, school-based groups, and/or specific content-area teachers.

Each of the frameworks was broken down into specific components (content, activities, vocabulary, suggested authors, etc.), by content area. A series of grade level or department meetings with teachers were conducted to focus on each of the subject areas.

Each group then developed a "manual" of activities appropriate to particular grade levels aligned with the framework, and expanded the curriculum where needed. The "manuals" were disseminated to every teacher at the appropriate level.

In interviews, the assistant superintendent stated that she reviews student assessment results (MCAS, Iowa's) and teacher input (by way of an MCAS REVIEW survey) to identify weak areas in the curriculum. She also reported conducting meetings at each school, where discussions of test results for that particular school and of the results system-wide has also informed the development of many opportunities for teacher involvement in aligning the curriculum with the frameworks, and project-based learning.

In summer workshops, teachers developed open-ended questions for each grade level and content area, which were disseminated in the form of manuals to every teacher in the district. Teacher training in the scoring of writing samples has also generated manuals for all district personnel. Portfolio assessment training involved teachers from every school and every grade level. The district sends out a weekly calendar of instructional activities in each subject area tied to the curriculum frameworks. Teacher committees have been organized to redesign report cards to reflect the content and skills aligned with the frameworks. The district plans to continue to review the curriculum and its alignment with the frameworks in all content areas.

Planning and development efforts in all areas of curriculum and its alignment with the frameworks and correlation with student achievement are the responsibility of the assistant superintendent, whose plan for improvement has created a systemic effort to raise achievement. The district should now consider how best to institutionalize plans and maintain the initiatives already in place. Collaborative leadership, involving building-level leaders must be fostered, and those teams must feel comfortable exercising their power. Responsibility for the development of district improvement plans shared. In order to provide for effective sustainability, the Woburn School Department should consider ways to engage other professionals in all stages of educational reform.

IV. Employee Survey

The audit team conducted a confidential survey of all employees of WPS to provide a forum for teachers and staff to express their opinions on education in WPS. Approximately 350 questionnaires were delivered to school staff and 187 responses were received and tabulated, a response rate of 53.4 percent. Areas covered by the survey include:

1. education reform,
2. education goals and objectives,
3. curriculum,
4. planning,
5. communications and mission statements,
6. budget process,
7. professional development,
8. supplies,
9. facilities, and
10. computers and other education technology.

Appendix E shows the teachers' answers to the survey questions. The Superintendent also received a summary of responses.

Sixty-eight percent of teachers think that education reform issues are considered when their own school plans are made and 69 percent think that also applies to district-wide plans. Seventy-seven percent believe that the school district is taking positive steps to improve education and 72 percent state that their job has changed because of education reform.

Seventy-three percent of teachers are clear about the school district's goals and objectives as well as how they relate to their own jobs. Forty-three percent feel that they have a role in the development of these goals and objectives and 69 percent confirm that there are indicators used to measure progress toward them.

Sixty-one percent of the teachers rate the overall state of the facilities as inadequate. Fifty-nine percent of the teachers rate the overall state of classrooms, labs and other teaching rooms as inadequate.

An overwhelming majority, (87 percent), of the teachers rate the number of computers available to students as insufficient. Fifty-six percent of the teachers believe that the computers are not in good working order.

Seventy-one percent believe that the curriculum is coherent and sequential. Fifty-three percent believe that the curriculum now in use in their school will improve student test scores while 13 percent said that it would not. Seventy-five percent of the teachers feel that there is a coherent, on-going effort within WPS to keep curriculum current and 51 percent feel that the teachers play an important role in reviewing and revising the curriculum. Fifty-nine percent feel that the curriculum does not impact test scores as much as how a subject is taught by a teacher.

V. Superintendent's Statement – Education Reform

As part of this review, the Superintendent was asked to submit a brief statement expressing his point of view with respect to three areas:

1. school district progress and education reform since 1993;
2. barriers to education reform; and
3. plans over the next three to five years.

The Superintendent's statement is included in *Appendix F*.

VI. Appendix

Appendix A1	School Committee Budgets
Appendix A2	Budgeted Teachers' Salaries by Selected Discipline
Appendix B1	Foundation Budget Line Items Targets and Expenditures FY94, FY96, FY98 - Table
Appendix B2 - B3	Foundation Budget Line Items Targets and Expenditures FY94, FY96, FY98 - Graph
Appendix C	Mass. Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)
Appendix D	Comparison of 1998 MCAS Average Scaled Scores
Appendix E	Employee Survey Results
Appendix F	Superintendent's Statement on Education Reform Accomplishments, Barriers and Goals
Appendix G	Superintendent's Letter of November 24, 1999

Woburn Public Schools
School Committee Budgets
(in thousands of dollars)

Category	FY89	FY93	FY89 - FY93 $ Incr.	FY89 - FY93 % Incr.	FY97	FY98	FY93 - FY98 $ Incr.	FY93 - FY98 % Incr.
Salaries and Pensions:								
High School Personnel	$3,837	$4,043	$205	5.3%	$4,682	$4,894	$852	21.1%
Middle School Personnel	$3,128	$3,382	$254	8.1%	$4,051	$4,184	$801	23.7%
Elementary Personnel	$4,385	$5,199	$814	18.6%	$6,306	$6,637	$1,438	27.7%
Special Education	$2,403	$2,305	($98)	-4.1%	$2,708	$3,083	$779	33.8%
Teachers: Other	$393	$477	$84	21.3%	$703	$665	$188	39.3%
Nurses	$188	$203	$15	8.2%	$293	$291	$88	43.2%
Secretaries	$639	$677	$39	6.0%	$774	$824	$147	21.7%
Custodians and Houseworkers	$1,373	$1,323	($49)	-3.6%	$1,339	$1,304	($20)	-1.5%
Administration	$182	$187	$5	2.6%	$274	$287	$100	53.5%
School Committee	$13	$14	$1	10.2%	$15	$15	$1	5.1%
Pensions	$144	$129	($15)	-10.4%	$86	$87	($42)	-32.5%
Subtotal Salaries & Pensions:	**$16,686**	**$17,940**	**$1,255**	**7.5%**	**$21,231**	**$22,271**	**$4,331**	**24.1%**
Non-Salaries:								
General Control	$83	$73	($11)	-12.7%	$107	$117	$44	61.0%
Instruct. Supp: Elementary	$226	$214	($12)	-5.2%	$238	$329	$115	54.0%
Instruct. Supp: Middle	$165	$146	($20)	-11.9%	$127	$182	$36	24.9%
Instruct. Supp: High	$205	$180	($25)	-12.2%	$136	$193	$13	7.4%
Auxiliary Agencies	$980	$505	($475)	-48.5%	$752	$1,035	$530	105.1%
Special Education	$1,204	$1,474	$271	22.5%	$1,598	$1,431	($43)	-2.9%
Fuel and Utilities	$946	$872	($74)	-7.8%	$850	$900	$28	3.2%
Maintenance and Equipment	$632	$295	($337)	-53.3%	$363	$448	$152	51.5%
Subtotal Non-Salary:	**$4,441**	**$3,758**	**($683)**	**-15.4%**	**$4,169**	**$4,635**	**$877**	**23.3%**
Grand Total:	**$21,126**	**$21,698**	**$572**	**2.7%**	**$25,400**	**$26,906**	**$5,207**	**24.0%**

Note: Data obtained from WPS

Woburn Public Schools
Budgeted Teachers' Salaries By Selected Discipline
(in thousands of dollars)

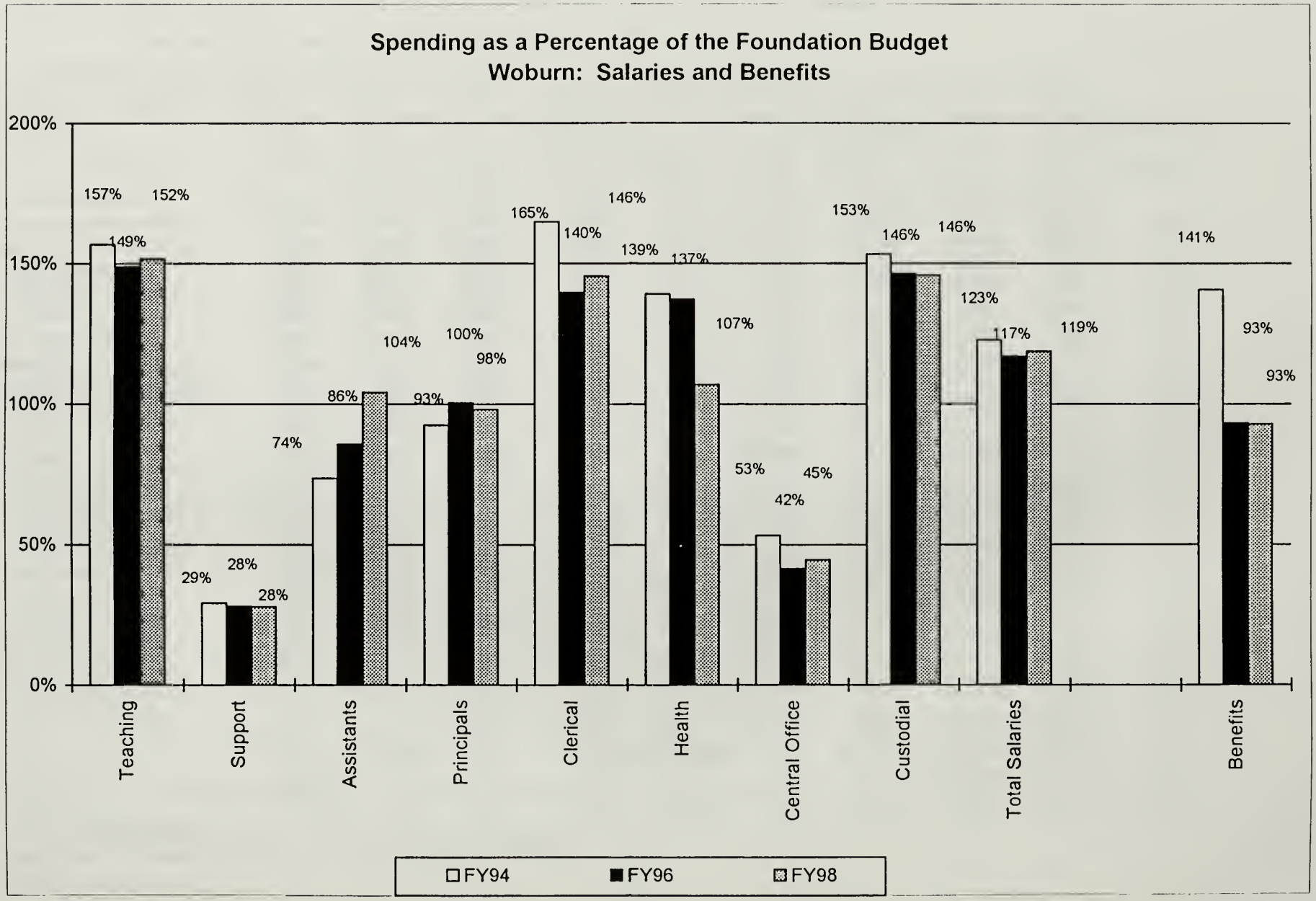
			FY93-FY97			FY93-FY98			FY97-FY98	
Discipline	FY93	FY95	FY97	$ Incr.	% Incr.	FY98	$ Incr.	% Incr.	$ Incr.	% Incr.
Elementary	$3,969	$4,350	$4,666	$697	17.6%	$4,824	$855	21.5%	$157	3.4%
English	$887	$1,034	$1,051	$164	18.5%	$1,040	$153	17.2%	($11)	-1.1%
Mathematics	$847	$840	$937	$90	10.6%	$960	$113	13.3%	$23	2.5%
Science	$670	$706	$831	$161	24.1%	$892	$222	33.2%	$61	7.3%
Social Studies	$895	$968	$1,013	$117	13.1%	$1,008	$113	12.6%	($5)	-0.5%
Foreign Language	$749	$875	$923	$175	23.3%	$936	$187	25.0%	$13	1.4%
Business Education	$318	$390	$377	$58	18.3%	$451	$133	41.7%	$74	19.7%
Art	$253	$340	$359	$106	42.1%	$378	$126	49.7%	$19	5.3%
Music	$223	$282	$255	$32	14.2%	$267	$44	19.8%	$12	4.9%
Kindergarten	$331	$434	$508	$177	53.5%	$431	$100	30.2%	($77)	-15.2%
Physical Education	$471	$601	$591	$119	25.3%	$661	$190	40.3%	$70	11.9%
Reading	$40	$44	$47	$6	15.8%	$47	$7	17.6%	$1	1.5%
Industrial Arts	$298	$263	$188	($110)	-37.0%	$167	($131)	-44.0%	($21)	-11.2%
Health	$132	$239	$249	$117	88.3%	$239	$107	80.6%	($10)	-4.1%
SPED	$1,625	$1,847	$1,888	$263	16.2%	$2,067	$442	27.2%	$179	9.5%
Grade 6	$700	$767	$855	$155	22.1%	$862	$162	23.2%	$8	0.9%
Home Economics	$203	$176	$208	$4	2.2%	$191	($12)	-6.1%	($17)	-8.1%
Alternative Ed	$42	$58	$74	$32	75.7%	$76	$34	82.0%	$3	3.5%
ESL	$63	$75	$86	$23	37.5%	$83	$20	32.6%	($3)	-3.5%
Geography	$56	$49	$51	($5)	-8.4%	$99	$43	77.6%	$48	93.9%
Tech Ed	$0	$0	$97	$97	0.0%	$46	$46	0.0%	($51)	-52.2%

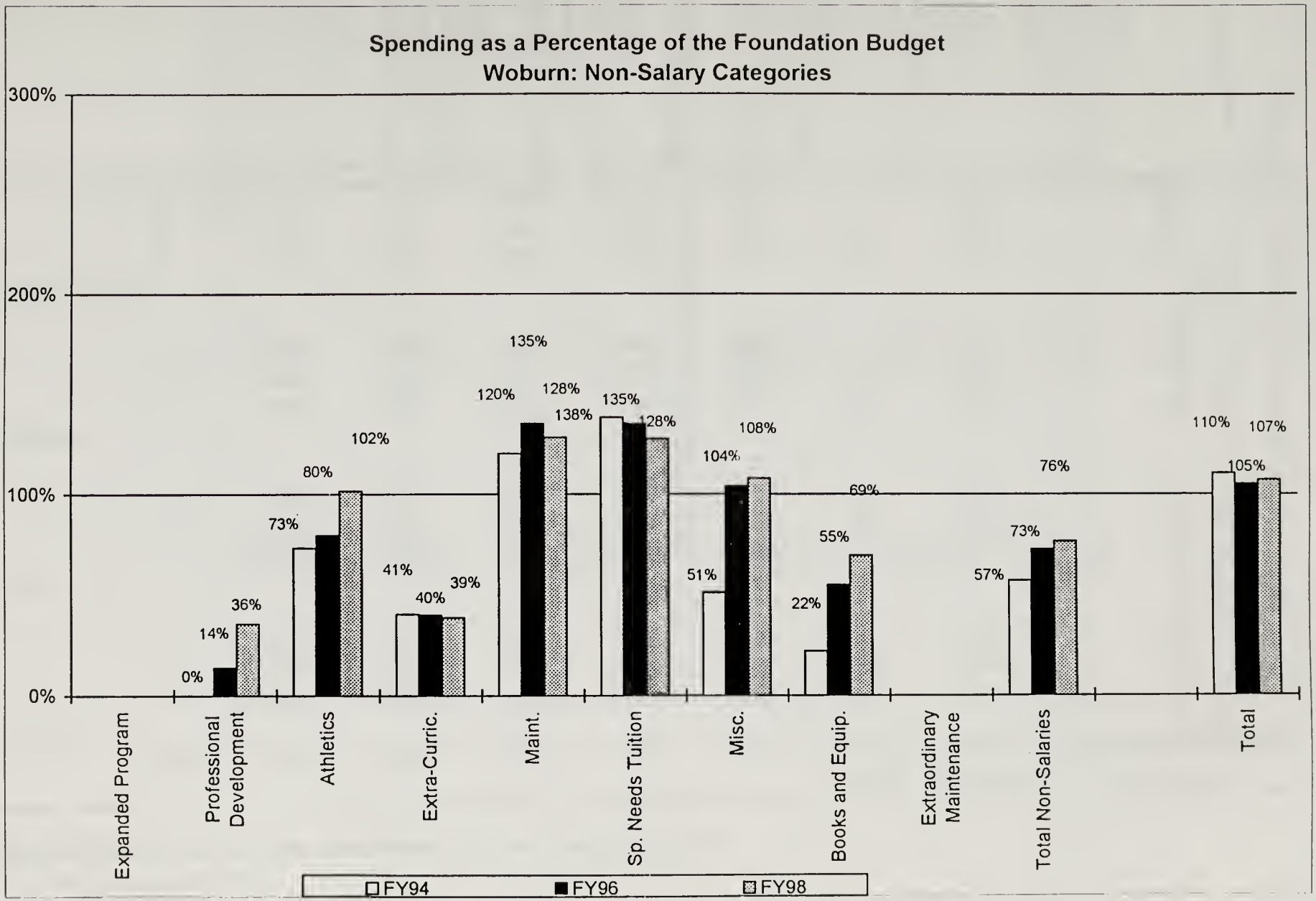
Note: Data obtained from WPS.

Woburn Public Schools
Net School Spending According to Foundation Budget Categories
(in thousands of dollars)

	Reported Expenditures			Foundation Budget			Variance Expend. over(under) Foundation		
	FY94	FY96	FY98	FY94	FY96	FY98	FY94	FY96	FY98
Teaching Salaries	$15,013	$15,306	$16,784	$9,574	$10,289	$11,066	$5,439	$5,017	$5,718
Support Salaries	$840	$858	$928	$2,869	$3,056	$3,329	($2,029)	($2,198)	($2,401)
Assistants' Salaries	$322	$407	$531	$438	$474	$510	($116)	($68)	$21
Principals' Salaries	$848	$964	$1,005	$915	$960	$1,024	($68)	$4	($19)
Clerical Salaries	$882	$788	$876	$536	$564	$602	$347	$224	$274
Health Salaries	$273	$287	$239	$196	$209	$223	$77	$78	$16
Central Office Salaries	$460	$377	$432	$863	$908	$968	($403)	($531)	($536)
Custodial Salaries	$1,256	$1,285	$1,382	$819	$878	$947	$437	$407	$435
Total Salaries	$19,895	$20,272	$22,177	$16,210	$17,338	$18,669	$3,685	$2,934	$3,508
Benefits	$3,168	$2,245	$2,412	$2,252	$2,411	$2,596	$916	($166)	($184)
Expanded Program	$0	$0	$0	$126	$260	$309	($126)	($260)	($309)
Professional Development	$0	$56	$155	$373	$400	$432	($373)	($344)	($277)
Athletics	$224	$237	$308	$306	$297	$303	($82)	($61)	$5
Extra-Curricular	$57	$58	$60	$140	$144	$153	($83)	($87)	($94)
Maintenance	$1,260	$1,517	$1,554	$1,048	$1,121	$1,210	$212	$396	$344
Special Needs Tuition	$819	$841	$834	$592	$623	$652	$227	$219	$181
Miscellaneous	$215	$460	$510	$421	$442	$473	($206)	$17	$38
Books and Equipment	$292	$749	$1,005	$1,318	$1,367	$1,447	($1,026)	($618)	($442)
Extraordinary Maintenance	$0	$0	$0	$699	$747	$807	($699)	($747)	($807)
Total Non-Salaries	$2,867	$3,918	$4,425	$5,023	$5,402	$5,786	($2,156)	($1,485)	($1,361)
Total	$25,929	$26,435	$29,014	$23,485	$25,151	$27,052	$2,444	$1,284	$1,963
Revenues	$122	$170					$122	$170	$0
Net School Spending	$25,807	$26,265	$29,014	$23,485	$25,151	$27,052	$2,322	$1,114	$1,963

Note: Data obtained from DOE and WPS. Totals may not add due to rounding.


Spending as a Percentage of the Foundation Budget
Woburn: Salaries and Benefits
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
157%
149%
152%
29%
28%
28%
74%
86%
104%
93%
100%
98%
165%
140%
146%
139%
137%
107%
53%
42%
45%
153%
146%
146%
123%
117%
119%
141%
93%
93%
Teaching
Support
Assistants
Principals
Clerical
Health
Central Office
Custodial
Total Salaries
Benefits
FY94
FY96
FY98


Spending as a Percentage of the Foundation Budget
Woburn: Non-Salary Categories
300%
200%
100%
0%
Expanded Program
Professional Development
Athletics
Extra-Curric.
Maint.
Sp. Needs Tuition
Misc.
Books and Equip.
Extraordinary Maintenance
Total Non-Salaries
Total
0%
14%
36%
73%
80%
102%
41%
40%
39%
120%
128%
138%
135%
135%
128%
51%
104%
108%
22%
55%
69%
57%
73%
76%
110%
105%
107%
FY94
FY96
FY98

Woburn Public Schools
Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Scores

	Grade	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1988-96 Change	1996 State Average	1996 WPS Over/(Under) State Avg.
Reading									
	4	1300	1320	1350	1410	1420	120	1350	70
	8	1260	1280	1250	1440	1430	170	1380	50
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1350	1400		1310	90
Math									
	4	1310	1290	1330	1400	1380	70	1330	50
	8	1270	1290	1240	1430	1350	80	1330	20
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1330	1380		1310	70
Science									
	4	1300	1320	1340	1400	1410	110	1360	50
	8	1270	1270	1290	1390	1360	90	1330	30
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1340	1360		1310	50
Social Studies									
	4	1310	1310	1340	1410	1410	100	1340	70
	8	1280	1330	1250	1390	1350	70	1320	30
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1340	1360		1300	60

Note: N/A indicates that test was not given to all grades in all years. Data obtained from DOE

Comparison of 1998 MCAS Average Scaled Scores

All Students	Woburn Average Scaled Scores	State Average Scaled Scores	Point Difference
Grade 4:			
English Language Arts	237	230	7
Mathematics	240	234	6
Science & Technology	244	238	6
Grade 8:			
English Language Arts	243	237	6
Mathematics	234	227	7
Science & Technology	232	225	7
Grade 10:			
English Language Arts	238	230	8
Mathematics	226	222	4
Science & Technology	232	225	7
All students attending this district for three years or more			
Grade 4:			
English Language Arts	238	232	6
Mathematics	241	235	6
Science & Technology	245	239	6
Grade 8:			
English Language Arts	243	238	5
Mathematics	235	228	7
Science & Technology	233	227	6
Grade 10:			
English Language Arts	238	234	4
Mathematics	227	225	2
Science & Technology	232	228	4

Note: Data provided by DOE

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Woburn
Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

1	Education Reform	1&2		4 &5		3
1.a.	Are you familiar with the issues of Education Reform, the Law passed in 1993?	90%		5%		5%
1.b.	Do you feel you have a good understanding of the purpose and the goals of the law?	79%		8%		13%
1.c.	Do you feel that there is a lot of confusion about what Education Reform is all about?	54%		17%		28%
1.d.	Do you feel the issues of Education Reform are considered when school district plans are made?	69%		10%		20%
1.e.	Do you feel the issues of Education Reform are considered when school-based plans are made?	68%		10%		22%
1.f.	In your opinion is the school district taking positive steps to improve education?	77%		8%		14%
1.g.	Do you feel your job has changed because of Education Reform?	72%		14%		14%
1.h.	Do you think there has been an improvement in student achievement in your school due to Education Reform?	32%		33%		35%
1.i.	Do you think the improvements in education at the school would have happened without Education Reform?	47%		13%		40%
1.j.	Have you perceived an increase in school funding tied directly to improvements in education in your district?	16%		47%		37%

2	Educational Goals and Objectives	1&2		4 &5		3
2.a.	Are the school administration's goals and objectives generally clear and understandable?	74%		9%		17%
2.b.	Are you clear about the school district's goals and objectives as they relate to your own job?	73%		11%		16%
2.c.	Are there indicators issued to measure progress toward goals and objectives generally?	59%		14%		27%
2.d.	Are there indicators used to measure your progress toward goals and objectives?	69%		12%		20%
2.e.	Do you have a role in developing these goals and objectives?	43%		41%		17%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Woburn

Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

3	Curriculum	1&2		4 &5		3
3.a.	Do you believe that your district's curriculum is coherent and sequential?	71%		14%		14%
3.b.	Do you believe that your curriculum is challenging and tied to preparing students for life after secondary school?	72%		11%		17%
3.c.	Is there a coherent, on-going effort within the district to keep curriculum current with evolving trends and best practices in pedagogy and educational research?	75%		10%		16%
3.d.	Do teachers play an important role in reviewing and revising curriculum in the district?	51%		27%		23%
3.e.	Will the curriculum now in use in your school improve student test scores?	53%		13%		33%
3.f.	Do you believe that the curriculum content does not impact test scores as much as how a subject is taught by a teacher?	59%		13%		27%

4	Planning	1&2		4 &5		3
4.a.	Is the planning for important issues (e.g. curriculum, budgetary, etc.) within the district a top-down process?	69%		10%		20%
4.a.1.	If the answer is "Definitely yes" (1) or "Generally yes" (2), is there an important role for teachers and professional staff in the planning process?	41%		33%		26%
4.b.	If staff does not have an important role in developing plans, are decisions made by the central office/school committee explained so that you can understand the basis for the decision/policy?	31%		34%		35%

5	Communications and Mission Statement	1&2		4 &5		3
5.a.	Is there adequate on-going communication between teachers and district administrators? In other words, do you think that you know what is going on in the district?	50%		29%		21%
5.b.	Is there adequate communication between you and your superiors?	68%		16%		17%
5.c.	Is there a mission statement in place for your school district?	63%		4%		33%
5.d.	Is there a mission statement in place for your school?	70%		4%		27%
5.e.	Does the mission statement define how the school is run, and how students are taught?	61%		9%		30%
5.f.	Are these mission statements applied in the operation of the school and the teaching of students?	56%		9%		35%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Woburn
Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

6	Budget Process	1&2		4 &5		3
6.a.	Do you understand your school budget process?	42%		39%		19%
6.b	Do you understand how the budget process impacts your department?	52%		29%		18%
6.c.	Is the school budgeting process fair and equitable?	24%		27%		49%
6.d.	Are budgetary needs solicited and adequately addressed in the budget process?	26%		29%		45%
6.e.	Once the budget is approved and implemented, does the allocation and use of funds match the publicly stated purposes?	28%		14%		58%
6.f.	Given the circumstances, the school department seems to be doing the best it can with in the school budget process.	49%		13%		38%
6.g.	Are there deficiencies in this process?	43%		15%		42%

7	Professional Development	1&2		4 &5		3
7.a.	Is there an adequate professional development program in your school?	68%		22%		10%
7.b.	Is the program designed to meet school needs and tied to the new frameworks and assessments?	73%		15%		12%
7.c.	Is the program designed to change the content of pedagogy in classrooms?	50%		15%		35%
7.d.	Are there deficiencies in the professional development program?	47%		29%		24%
7.e.	Did you participate in the professional development program in 1997/98?	86%		11%		3%
7.f.	Professional development is making a difference and will improve education in my school district.	51%		24%		25%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Woburn
Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

8	Supplies	1&2		4 &5		3
8.a.	Have you generally received sufficient and appropriate supplies to do your job?	56%		28%		16%
8.b.	Have you generally received sufficient and appropriate basic educational supplies (e.g. chalk, paper, pens, pencils, etc.) to do your job?	70%		17%		13%
8.c.	Have you generally been supplied with a sufficient number of a current edition of textbooks?	70%		20%		11%
8.d.	Are students given a copy of these textbooks to keep at home during the year?	2%		92%		6%
8.e.	Have you generally been supplied with sufficient ancillary curriculum materials (e.g. current maps, lab supplies, videos, etc.)?	38%		42%		20%
8.f.	Is the process for obtaining supplies and materials effective, time sensitive and responsive to your classroom needs?	41%		37%		23%

9	Facilities	1&2		4 &5		3
9.a.	How would you rate the overall state of school facilities (e.g. cleanliness, security, maintenance, structural integrity)?	17%		61%		22%
9.b.	How would you rate the overall state of classrooms, labs, and other teaching rooms/areas?	19%		59%		22%
9.c.	How would you rate the overall state of the common areas (e.g. hallways, stairwells, and cafeteria)?	25%		51%		24%
9.d.	How would you rate the overall state of the areas outside of the building (e.g. playgrounds, walk-ways and grounds)?	32%		38%		31%
9.e.	Would you agree with the following statement: "The school administration makes an effort to provide a clean and safe working environment."	45%		36%		18%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Woburn
Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

10	Computers and other Educational Technology	1&2		4 &5		3
10.a.	Are the usage of computers and other technological tools a significant part of the management practices at the school?	36%		44%		20%
10.b.	Are the usage of computers and other technological tools a significant part of the instructional practices at the school?	16%		65%		19%
10.c.	In terms of student usage, are computers generally available only in a computer laboratory setting or library/media center?	79%		15%		6%
10.d.	How many computers are located in your classroom?	Avg. of				
10.e.	Do you have a school computer provided for and dedicated for your usage?	20%		78%		2%
10.f.	Is there a school computer provided for and shared by you and other teachers?	51%		41%		8%
10.g.	Are there computers available for and used on a regular basis by students?	39%		51%		10%
10.h.	About how many minutes a week does each student use a computer? (Estimated) ____min.	minutes				
10.i.	Is the number of available computers sufficient for the number of students?	6%		87%		7%
10.j.	Are the computers in good working order?	24%		56%		19%
10.k.	Are the software packages in the computers uniform and consistent with the instructional level to be provided?	21%		47%		32%
10.l.	Is there a policy or program providing for computer training for teachers on software and computers used by students?	21%		55%		23%

WOBURN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SUPERINTENDENT'S STATEMENT—EDUCATION REFORM

In this era of Education Reform the Woburn Public Schools have been recognized both at the local and state levels for excellence in education resulting from demonstrated student achievement on the third grade IOWA Test of Basic Skills in reading as well as the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. It should be stated that successes in improved student learning have been made possible thanks to the initiatives and focused efforts of our administrative and teaching staffs along with the dedication and leadership of the School Committee. In addition, the financial support of the Mayor and City Council continues to illustrate a commitment to providing a quality education for all children in Woburn. Some highlights of Woburn's efforts to provide quality education through reform include:

- The implementation of the WE^3 program (Woburn Expects Excellence in Education). This program has produced:
  - increased academic requirements in grades 9-12, providing a liberal arts type of program for all students
  - encouraged community service through the Y.E.S. program (Youth Engaged in Service)
  - expanded curriculum and assessment methods to assure that the identified curriculum is being taught as well as effectively assessed
  - a tuition based pre-school
  - theme schools at each elementary school
  - after school enrichment programs
  - partnerships with local businesses.

- Strategic planning forums that involved school and community members developed a Mission Statement, Student Competencies, and Five Overarching Goals designed to guide the system in areas of technology integration, curriculum alignment, professional development, parent involvement, and facilities improvement.

- Increased funding and support for the implementation of our Department of Education approved Technology Plan has been realized through the school budget, private and corporate donations, as well as through the newly formed City of Woburn Education Technology Foundation, Inc.

- The Implementation of "Tracking the Frameworks I and II" that serves two purposes respectively:
  - to monitor classroom instruction on the part of school principals to assure that teachers are teaching the identified Massachusetts curriculum frameworks

- to enable teachers and principals to have a meaningful dialogue about curriculum modifications that need to occur in order to provide instruction aligned with the Massachusetts State Frameworks.

- The ACES (Academic Club Enrichment Service), a remedial program for students who have either performed poorly or who are at risk of performing poorly on the MCAS, has been implemented with remediation being provided in the disciplines of English, mathematics, science and engineering technology, history, and the social sciences.

- Curriculum mapping has occurred that organized the Massachusetts frameworks by grade level in notebooks for:

  - authors to be used at each grade level
  - biographies to familiarize students in grades K-4 regarding historical events
  - vocabulary of the frameworks to insure each student uses subject-based vocabulary
  - a writing manual that stresses the use of organizers and provides topics for each grade level
  - a portfolio manual to be used as a guide to select work to mirror student achievement at each level.

- A report card that assesses student achievement in areas consistent with the topics and language of the curriculum frameworks has been developed for implementation during the 1999-2000 school year.

- A Summer Reading Club is made available for students who score pre-reader and basic in grade 3 as well as for second grade students who are recommended by their teachers.

- Foreign language instruction is provided in grades K-3 throughout our elementary schools.

- School principals serve as chairmen of their school's pre-referred student support team.

- Professional development opportunities have increased in all academic areas. Professional development in the areas of instruction and methodology have also increased.

- A learning center has been established at Woburn High School that combines the resources of regular and special education staff and students to provide tutorial services.

- Innovative alternative educational programming that eliminates the cost of out of district placements have been implemented:

  - Project High Expectations serving the needs of students with psychiatric and emotional disabilities at the secondary level

- Pervasive developmental disorder/autism program for students in pre-kindergarten through Grade 1.

- Evaluation processes have been instituted for central office administrators as well as for school principals that base salary increases on annual performance appraisals.

- Phase I of our School Facilities Improvement Plan has been approved and will be ready for bidding in the fall of 1999. It involves the construction of a new elementary school as well as some renovation work at the Woburn High School and at both the Joyce and Kennedy Middle Schools.

BARRIERS TO EDUCATION REFORM

- The School Choice Law has created an untenable situation for cities and towns who have accessible vocational program alternatives available to students other than those that are offered at assigned regional vocational schools. Students who would otherwise have had their requests for tuition to alternative vocational school settings denied for the exploratory freshman year, enter alternative vocational schools as freshmen through School Choice. They convert to alternative Chapter 74 tuition programs, unavailable at the assigned regional vocational school, in their sophomore year continuing through the senior year. This has created a $250,000 problem in Woburn that did not exist prior to Education Reform.

- While school facilities improvement plans have begun to be implemented in Woburn, additional State funding needs to be made available to assure the equitable delivery of educational programs and services throughout all of our schools.

- Despite significant efforts to operate special needs programs in Woburn in a cost effective manner, without additional funding from the State it is becoming increasingly difficult to avoid the diversion of financial support for additional educational improvements from the mainstream to unanticipated necessary special education services.

PLANS OVER THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS

Over the next three to five years, it is our hope to:

- Continue to expand our foreign language offerings at the elementary level with the expectation that foreign language will be studied in all elementary grades by September 2001.

- Implement additional remedial programs to help those students who are unable to meet criteria established for successful performance on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System.

- Continue to implement our technology plan with efforts aimed toward enhancing student learning and making our management and business practices more efficient and effective.

- Continue our efforts at the state level in taking leadership role in support for higher standards through participation in the following organizations:
  - MCAS Advisory Board
  - Science and Technology Assessment Committee
  - Coalition for Higher Standards.
- Implement Phase II of our Long-Range Planning effort to improve school facilities throughout all of Woburn's schools.
- Provide full-day kindergarten programs.
- Expand per-school opportunities for three and four year olds.
- Continue to explore alternative educational program opportunities for students who are either at risk of failure or who are disruptive to the school environment.
- To continue to revise and implement strong classroom based programs to insure that all students are successful on the MCAS.

CRB:vss
7/13/99

Submitted by:

Carl R. Batchelder, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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November 24, 1999

Dieter H. Wahl
Director of Education Audits
Massachusetts Department of Revenue
Division of Local Services
Post Office Box 9490
Boston, MA., 02205-9490

Dear Mr. Wahl:

This letter is written in response to the request on the part of the Education Management Accountability Board that we submit additional information that would highlight those programs/practices that we feel have been particularly helpful in affecting a rise in the achievement of students in Woburn. This request was made by the Board upon its review and positive commentary on the Division of Local Services and Department of Education report regarding various financial and educational operations of the Woburn Public Schools under Education Reform. A brief synopsis of these programs/practices is included with this letter and we are pleased to submit them to you.

If there is any further information which might be needed please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carl R. Batchelder

Carl R. Batchelder, Ed.D.
Superintendent

WOBURN PUBLIC SCHOOLS - ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES

The Woburn Public Schools has engaged in many activities in an effort to increase achievement, raise the standards, and make the curriculum frameworks a part of the everyday life within the community.

The initiatives that have been taken are a part of the WE^3 (Woburn Expects Excellence in Education) Program. They include a variety of curriculum efforts ranging from increased graduation requirements to changes in instruction and daily classroom life to after school programs to greater parental involvement to summer programs.

The program at Woburn High School has been changed so all students are engaged in a liberal arts education. Each student takes four years of English, mathematics, history and social science, science, foreign language, and physical education. In addition all students take health, family and consumer science, art, music, business, and technology education. Students are encouraged to become engaged in community service and those that do receive a gold tassel and plaque at graduation to honor their commitment to others.

Within the classroom teachers have changed the ways they help students approach learning. A variety of methods, designed to strengthen instruction and encompass the spirit and content of the curriculum frameworks, have been introduced systemwide. Examples of these include:

A. WRITING PROCESS: A writing manual that included a wide assortment of writing organizers, writing ideas, and blackline masters was produced. Each teacher received a copy of the manual, explanation of its content, and instruction in its use at a building level or department meeting. The manual has been successful in helping students communicate their knowledge and thoughts more effectively.

B. WRITING CALENDARS/QUESTION OF THE DAY: To continue to provide teachers with a wide variety of new writing prompts several calendars are produced for each week of the academic year. One consists of a writing prompt for each day. The prompts generally are related to the date through an historical or science related event. Separate calendars are produced which provide additional writing prompts or daily questions in science, history, mathematics, and foreign language.

C. VOCABULARY NOTEBOOK: Recognizing that those who are truly educated in a subject use vocabulary related to the subject we have used the curriculum frameworks to produce a set of seven vocabulary notebooks. Each notebook contains a list of subject related words students in grades preK - 4; 5 - 8; 9 - 10; and 11 - 12 should know and be able to use accurately.

D. AUTHORS' NOTEBOOK: Every effort has been made to engage all teachers in the frameworks and to make all teachers aware they have a role in helping students to achieve the standards Massachusetts has set. Teachers have met by grade level and worked to divide up the authors and readings listed in the English/Language Arts Framework. The authors thus assigned to each grade level have been correlated with the reading done at that grade level. Selections from authors assigned to a grade level but not specifically include in the reading text or supplemental materials for a grade have been organized into an Authors' Notebook. In this way we have also begun to avoid the repetition of certain works at different grade levels. Through the budget process we were able to provide money for each classroom to buy sets of books by the authors assigned to their grade. The authors have also become the basis of our Summer Reading Program.

E. EXPERIMENT NOTEBOOK: As we have reviewed our science program to insure that we are meeting each of the standards we became aware that our students were not engaged in as many hands-on experiences as we would like them to be. To offset this problem teachers from each grade level met and developed a set of experiments to be completed by the students during each unit of study. The nature of the experiments became more open-ended as the grade level increased. The experiments were reviewed with each teacher at grade level meetings and funding was provided to purchase necessary apparatus.

F. OPEN RESPONSE QUESTIONS: To help students develop thinking skills and to improve their ability to communicate thoughts and concepts a series of open response questions for each grade (grades two through twelve) have been developed. Teachers select a question each term for students to answer. The teachers meet, develop a rubric, and correct the questions. The meetings allow teachers to see the wide range of approaches students take in answering a question and the different levels of sophistication students have in answering questions. Teachers are encouraged to use all of the questions for their grade level or subject throughout the year. They are encouraged to discuss with students what the rubric for a question might look like and what types of information they would include in their answer to receive an advanced rating. As the state releases questions and rubrics they are discussed with the appropriate teachers and strategies for their use are developed.

G. TRACKING THE STANDARDS I and II: To insure that teachers are working toward having each student meet the standards two notebooks have been developed for the use of principals and department chairs. The first notebook provides administrators with knowledge of whether standards have been covered in class. However, the templates in the second notebook provide a basis for a curriculum conversation among teachers, specialists, and administrators about how each standard has been covered.

H. NEW IDEAS: We have established an e-mail service that gathers information from a variety of listserv sites. The information is forwarded to teachers to provide them with a constant supply of new ideas and topics to consider. A recent find was a site that used graphic organizers to help students explore American novels.

I. CURRICULUM MAPPING: Teachers have worked to map our curriculum in each of the seven framework areas. We used a backwards mapping, starting with the standards in grades twelve, ten, eight, and four and asking what we needed to do in that grade and each of the previous grades to meet the standard. In this way we have helped to engage teachers at all levels in a standards based educational process.

In addition to the classroom efforts a variety of out of school programs have been established to engage students. These include:

A. AFTERSCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS: Each school offers afterschool enrichment programs with offerings ranging from homework clubs to gymnastics. The offerings each term are based upon surveys of students and parents and the skills and abilities of teachers and parents in various areas.

B. SCIENCE SUMMER CAMP: Each summer W.R. Grace sponsors a science enrichment camp for outstanding science students from each school. The week long program provides students with a variety of opportunities to explore new areas.

C. SUMMER READING CLUB: The Summer Reading Club is for second and third grade students who did not do well on the third grade reading test or who are recommended by their teacher. The students meet with teachers for two hours each day to read new books and review reading skills. Class size is kept to twelve students per teacher. The club meets daily for six weeks.

D. ACES: The ACES Program was funded through a grant from DOE. It provide a three hour per day academic program for six weeks for students entering grades five, six, eight, and nine. The students were identified for the program through teacher recommendation and MCAS sores. Class size was kept to twelve students per teacher.

E. SPECIAL EDUCATION SUMMER SCHOOL: The Special Education Summer School provides students with opportunities to increase their ability to meet the ELA and mathematics standards. The program meets for three hours each day for six weeks. Through it students on IEPs have the opportunity to meet with teachers in small groups to develop specific skills.

F. SUMMER READING PROGRAM: All students in Woburn have a required summer reading list. During the summer elementary school students are invited to come to the administration building on a weekly basis to discuss their reading with high school students. The students encourage them and suggest further reading.

We have initiated a variety of programs to engage parents in their children's education and to help familiarize them with the standards. Included in these programs are:

A. NEWSLETTERS: Newsletters are distributed by each school. Each edition contains information about the frameworks and MCAS. In addition the administration publishes newsletters that provide the parents with examples of student work at level (advanced, proficient, needs improvement, and failing) in each subject area as well as composition.

B. ACADEMIC NIGHTS: After several unsuccessful attempts to engage parents in discussions about the Frameworks we instituted Academic Nights for elementary school students and their parents. Each night revolves around a theme such as circus or sports and a particular subject. During the evening students and their parents visit a number of booths, each with an activity that is tied to a particular standard. For example, fourth grade students participating in a golf activity at Mathematics Sports Night might have hit their three balls into holes with numbers attached. They would then be challenged to use different operations to make the largest number possible.

C. SENIOR CITIZEN VOLUNTEERS: We actively recruit and encourage senior citizens to volunteer as reading partners in our classrooms. Since instituting this program three years ago we have seen a greater understanding of the elderly among our students as well as an increase in reading skills.

Woburn Central Administration
Senior Management Staff

Carl Batchelder, Ed.D.,	Superintendent
Louise Mary Nolan, Ph.D.,	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum
Joseph Elia,	Business Manager
Christine Lenahan,	Director of Special Education
Daniel J. Hannon, Ph.D.,	Director of Educational Technology